

HOURS WITH THE IMMORTALS

HOURS WITH THE IMMORTALS

*A SERIES OF POPULAR SKETCHES AND
APPRECIATIONS OF DISTINGUISHED
FOREIGN POETS*

BY

ROBERT P. DOWNES, LL.D.

AUTHOR OF 'PURE PLEASURES,' 'PILLARS OF OUR FAITH,' 'SEVEN
SUPREME POETS,' 'THE ART OF NOBLE LIVING,' ETC., ETC

He cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion,
either accompanied with or prepared for the enchanting skill
of music, and with a tale, forsooth, he cometh unto you with
a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the
chimney-corner —SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

To

MY DEAR FRIEND

C. H. WILLIAMSON, Esq

OF STANSTEAD, SUTTON, SURREY

IN MEMORY OF

MANY KINDNESSES AND OF A MOST HELPFUL AND

INSPIRING LITERARY FELLOWSHIP

P R E F A C E

THIS book is the fruit of a conviction that there is room in our literature for a popular presentation of some of those distinguished poets who are the pride and the glory of other lands than ours. In his remarkable treatise on Shakespeare, Victor Hugo pleads with great earnestness for a wide scheme of intellectual instruction for the people. And, insomuch as the perpetual presence of the beautiful in their works constitutes the poets the highest of all teachers, he maintains that the scheme he advocates should be crowned by an exposition of the finest products of genius in the realm of poesy. We entirely agree with him.

With regard to foreign poets, however, so many books have to be consulted that the ordinary reader might well abandon the task in despair. In a realm so extensive selection and compression are

needed. It is this which we have endeavoured to supply in these pages.

It will be noted that we do not deal here with those illustrious foreign lords of song—Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Virgil, Dante. The reason for this is that we have already presented sketches of these masters in a previous volume entitled *Seven Supreme Poets*.

We are well aware that with regard to foreign authors much of the delicacy and finer meaning of the original is lost in the process of translation. The flower suffers in colour and in 'perfume' from its transplantation into another soil. But all the fragrance is not lost, nor all the loveliness, and because that which remains is of the utmost value to all lovers of the beautiful in literature we are glad to be able to place in their hands these sketches and reviews.

Never true poet lived and sang in vain

Lost if his name and withered if his wreath

The thoughts he woke must evermore remain

Fused in our light and blended with our breath—

All life more noble and all earth more fair

Because that soul refined man's common air

ROBERT P. DOWNES

CONTENTS

	I	PAGE
EURIPIDES		I
	II	
• ARISTOPHANES °		20
	III	
PINDAR		36
	IV	
HORACE		48
	V	
PETRARCH		68
	VI	
✓ TASSO		88
	VII	
CAMOENS		109
	lx	

,

VIII

CALDERON

PAGE

123

IX

✓ RACINE

142

X

SCHILLER

170

" XI

✓ GOETHE

260

XII

VICTOR HUGO

,

257

HOURS WITH THE IMMORTALS

EURIPIDES

• DIED 406 B C

Not in thunder or in flame
Thy imperial message came
But with 'droppings of warm tears'
And with quivering hopes and fears,
Pity shed its tender spell
From a heart which loved it well
And gods themselves with nobler mien,
Adorned 'the visionary scene'

R. I. D

In all his pieces there is the sweet human voice, the fluttering human soul —**HENELM DIGBY**

EURIPIDES was the third of that great trinity of early Greek dramatists who by common consent are numbered with the immortals in the realms of poesy, and he differed from his predecessors in the quality of his genius and the character of his work. While in Aeschylus we

have the prophet of Greek tragedy and in Sophocles the finished artist, in Euripides we have the master of pathos and romance

Forty years younger than Aeschylus, Euripides fell upon a different age from the severe and simple one in which the father of Greek tragedy was trained—an age further removed from gods and god-like heroes and more fully fraught with human sympathies, an age less awful and august and more humane and tender. In spirit and in genius he stands to Aeschylus as Elisha stood to Elijah, veiling his imperial power in the gentleness of human sympathies and affections. 'Not of the wrath of the Titans who scaled Olympus and defied the tyranny of Zeus does he sing. Rather are his delights with the sons of men, with their homes and with their graves, with 'love whose familiar voice wearies not ever,' and with marriage whose sanctities no foul touch may profane.

Aristophanes condemns Euripides because he does not in his plays sustain the majesty of Aeschylus. But this was really a merit and not a fault. As Robert Browning says, in bringing it

Down to the level of our common life

Down to the beating of our human heart

Euripides made tragedy the heritage of the world. Tragedy could not be maintained at the Aeschylean level. The human spirit quails before

it as a leaf driven by the tempest We cannot
range the forest with the lion or dwell with the
eagle in his lofty eyrie

Birth and Career

Euripides was born in the island of Salamis, and came into the world on the day of the great sea fight which has made that name immortal His family was evidently of high standing, since he received a liberal and expensive education He studied rhetoric and eloquence under Prodicus, ethics under Socrates (who was, however, companion as well as tutor) and philosophy under Anaxagoras He was in his twenty sixth year when he presented himself for the first time among the candidates for the dramatic crown, but not until he had attained the age of forty were his efforts after the first prize successful

According to history, it would appear that, like some other notable poets, Euripides would have fared better had he remained a bachelor, for though twice married he had no comfort in his wives Nevertheless, it stands to his honour that his own misfortunes did not degrade his idea of woman, since some of his finest portraits are delineations of heroic and unselfish womanhood His haughtiness and reserve created for him many enemies, and such

was his confidence in his own genius that he did not hesitate to defy a whole audience if they differed from him in opinion. On one occasion, when the whole theatre rose and demanded that a passage the listeners did not like should be struck out of one of his plays, he said 'Good people, it is my business to teach you, and not to be taught by you'

Euripides adhered for the most part to the fixed body of legends, chiefly derived from Homer, which supplied the subjects treated by the early Greek dramatists, but he invested the ancient stories with a tenderer pathos, while in his *Medea* and his *Hippolytus* he broke new ground and proved himself an accomplished master of the art of tragedy. The Greek estimate of his fame and power finds appropriate utterance in the lines of Philemon, a brother dramatist

Hail dear Euripides for whom a bed
In black leaved vales Pierian is spread
Dead though thou art, yet know thy fame shall be
Like Homer's green through all eternity

The Story of Alcestis

Passing now from the man himself to the works which have made him immortal, we first linger on that story of *Alcestis* which forms the subject of one of the most pathetic and beautiful of his dramas.

The fates have decreed the death of Admetus, king of Phærae in Thessaly, but Apollo has prevailed on them to accept a substitute. His father and mother decline to make the required sacrifice, but his wife Alcestis is willing to ransom him with her life. Endowed with every noble and loving quality of woman, she prepares herself for the great renunciation. In the presence of her two children she bids farewell to her husband.

Admetus—for how 'tis with me thou seest—
Receive my last commands before I die

- Thee I have honoured—thee preferred that thou
Shouldst live on whilst uncompelled I die
On thy behalf I might have stayed in life
And wedded whom I would and reigned in state
But that I counted it no worthy life
To live deprived of thee, with these poor orphans,
Nor have I spared my beauty nor my youth
Nor all the fond delights of this my prime

Farewell then and be happy thou Admetus
Boast of my wifely virtue ye my children
Cherish the memory of the best of mothers

Then we read of the despair and sorrow of Admetus as she is delivered up to death. The funeral rites are celebrated and the sweetest and noblest of women is committed to the tomb. 'And presently, to quote from the translation by Browning—

And presently
In came the mourners from the funeral
One after one until we hoped at last
Would be Alcestis and so end our dream
Could they have really left Alcestis lone
I the wayside sepulchre! Home all save she!
And when Admetus felt that it was so,
By the stand still when he lifted head and face
From the two hiding hands and peplos fold
And looked forth knew the palace knew the hills
Knew the plains knew the friendly frequency there
And no Alcestis any more again
Why the whole woe bellow like broke on him

Now he was made aware how dear is death
How lovable the dead are, how the heart
Yearns in us to go hide where they repose
When we find sunbeams do no good to see
Nor earth rests rightly where our footsteps fall

But the tender genius of Euripides cannot bear
the burden of such a sorrow Therefore he brings
Hercules to the house as a guest, who noting the
unfathomable grief, is moved with pity, and by his
godlike power compels Death to release his prey

Mark the scene in which Hercules, having spoiled
the house of death, returns from the sepulchre with
the devoted Alcestis

Under the great guard of one arm there leant
A shrouded something I've and woman like
Propped by the heart beats neath the lion-coat
Then out of Hercules a great glow broke
'Look at her! See if she in any way
Present thee with resemblance of thy wife!

Ah but the tears come find the words at fault!
There is no telling how the hero twitched
The veil off, and there stood, with such fixed eyes
And such slow smile Alcestis silent self

Beside, when he found speech, you guess the speech
He could not think he saw his wife again
It was some mocking god that used the bliss
To make him mad! Then Hercules must help
Assure him that no spectre mocked at all,
He was embracing whom he buried once.
Still—did he touch might he address the true—
True eye, true body of the true live wife?
And Hercules said smiling 'All was truth
Fain would Admetus keep that splendid smile
Ever to light him

How fine is the dramatist's conception of the
'great glow' breaking from the giant frame of
Hercules as he brings back the noble wife, and the
smile of the deliverer which Admetus will keep
to light his path for ever! It is in such strokes as
these that true genius reveals itself for our delight
and our uplifting

'Iphigenia in Aulis'

This is another tender and moving drama from
the pen of Euripides. The Grecian fleet lies be-
calmed at the port of Aulis and cannot advance
to besiege Troy. It is revealed to Agamemnon
that only the sacrifice of his daughter Iphigenia will
secure for the fleet a favourable voyage. With

great reluctance he at last sends a letter blistered with many tears to Argos, directing Clytemnestra, her mother, to bring the maiden to the camp without delay

It is at this point the tragedy opens. As the curtain is withdrawn, the centre of the stage is occupied by the pavilion of Agamemnon; on the left are the white tents of Hellas, with the dusky ships behind, on the right the road leads towards the open country, from which the devoted daughter and her mother will soon arrive, in answer to the king's first summons. The time is night, the 'brave, o'erhanging firmament' is studded with stars. The only sounds audible are the tramp of sentinels and the challenge of the watch, the camp is wrapped in deep slumber.

Not the sound
Of birds is heard, nor of the sea, the winds
Are hushed in silence

And now Clytemnestra and Iphigenia have entered the camp. They are welcomed by the chorus, while the unsuspecting queen, thanking them for their courtesy and gentleness of speech, says:

I hope that I am come
To happy nuptials, leading her a bride
But from the chariot take the dowry gifts,
Brought with me for the virgin to the house
Bear them with careful hands. My daughter, leave
The chariot now, and place upon the ground

Thy delicate foot kind women in your arms
 Receive her—she is tender prithee too
 Lend me a hand that I may leave this seat
 In seemly fashion Some stand by the yoke
 Fronting the horses they are quick of eye
 And hard to rule when startled Now receive
 This child an infant still Dost sleep my boy?
 The rolling of the car hath wearied thee
 Yet wake to see thy sister made a bride
 A noble youth the bridegroom Thetis son
 And he will wed into a noble house¹

The wonder and delight of Iphigenia at the brave new world of the camp are portrayed with the hand of a master but how deep is her grief when she discovers that in obedience to an unkind decree youth love and life are to be abandoned! Vainly she appeals for pity to the stern black bearded kings who form with her father a part of the expedition, the fleet is rotting on the waters and the soldiers clamour for the sacrifice while low murmurs, which threaten mutiny roll like sullen thunder through the camp Iphigenia must die And now the daughter of a line of heroes shows herself heroic She will be the victim whom the goddess demands Troy shall fall, Greece shall triumph in place of marriage and happy years she will die for the common weal

" Aeschylus and Sophocles in their version of this touching story, represent Iphigenia as being really

sacrificed But Euripides, in his deeper tenderness, deprecates a fate so bitter, and ordains that on the approach of the maiden to the altar of Diana a fawn shall appear, which is sacrificed in her stead

Closely akin to this moving drama is that scene from the *Hecuba* of Euripides which describes the death of Polyxena another incident of the siege of Troy, of a like order with that we have just described This incident occurs, however, after and not before the siege and here the cruel sacrifice actually takes place The story runs as follows

During the period that the Grecian fleet is detained on the coast of Thrace, on its return from the siege of Troy, the ghost of Achilles appears in the middle of the night and demands the sacrifice of Polyxena the virgin daughter of Hecuba that favourable winds may be granted by the gods. Hecuba pleads with Achilles for the life of her child Then Polyxena breaks the silence

I see thee bow beneath thy robe O king
Thy land is hidden thy face turned from mine
Lest I should touch thee by the beard and pray
Fear not thou hast escaped the god of prayers
For my part. I will rise and follow thee
Driven by strong need yea and not loth to die.
Lo! if I should not seek death I were fond
A cowardly life-loving selfish soul

Thus does Polyxena nobly express her contempt of life, when life has to be accepted on dishonourable terms. Euripides now carries the story home to the heart in the scene where the herald tells Hecuba how her daughter died. The stern soldier, Pyrrhus, is appointed to perform the deed. Pyrrhus draws his sword from its scabbard, and the youths who assist at the ghastly sacrifice draw near to hold the maiden

Which she perceiving, with these words addressed them.
'Willing to die, let no hand touch me, boldly
To the uplifted sword I hold my neck
You give me to the gods, then give me free'
Loud the applause, then Agamemnon cried,
'Let no man touch her!' and the youths drew back.
Soon as she heard the royal words, she clasped
Her robe, and from her shoulder rent it down,
And bared her snow white bosom, beauteous
Beyond the dearest sculptors nicest art
Then bending to the earth her knee, she said—
Ere never yet has heard more mournful words—
'If 'tis thy will, young man, to strike this breast,
Strike, or my throat dost thou prefer, behold
It stretched to meet thy sword'¹

Even the 'rugged Pyrrhus' is touched with pity, pauses, and at last, reluctantly,

Deep in her bosom plunged the shining steel,
Her life-blood gushed in streams yet e'en in death,
Studious of modesty, her beauteous limbs
She covered with her robe

¹ W. B. Donne

The 'Medea' of Euripides

The *Medea* is the story of a wronged woman's bitter and terrible revenge—a tigress who has still a human heart. In this tremendous and awful tragedy Euripides breaks new ground, and none can be insensible to the pity or the terror which he inspires.

The story of the play runs thus. Jason has deserted his wife Medea, a witch brought by him in his quest of the golden fleece from the Colchian land of mystery and magic, to marry Glauce, the daughter of Creon, king of Corinth. Medea is to go forth from Corinth with her two sons, an out-cast—a wife despised and flung away. Creon cannot rest until the Colchian witch is out of his dominions. An old nurse expresses her fear of Medea's vengeance, and trembles for the children. She says to a servant of Jason's.

To the utmost keep them by themselves,
Nor bring them near their sorrow-frenzied mother.
For late I saw her with the roused bull's glare
View them as though she'd at them, and I trow
That she'll not bate her wrath till it have swooped
Upon some prey.

Medea's voice is heard within, exclaiming:

Cursed sons
Of a loathed mother, die, ye and your sire,
And let our foul house wane away.

The chorus of Corinthian women comment on her wild and whirling words, and Medea comes forth expatiating on the wrongs of her insulted womanhood. She swears

By Hecate, who dwells on her hearth's shrine,
That none shall wring her heart and still be glad

'The father, the girl, and he who is my husband
shall perish by dagger or by drug ere sunset'

Having secured a days delay by a passionate appeal to Creon, she sets about her fell purpose. What she does must be done quickly, for, she says

My enemies crowd on all sail
And there is now no haven from despair

Summoning Jason into her presence, she pretends to be reconciled to her banishment, and offers as a present to the new wife, Glauce, a robe of richest beauty, and to the king of Corinth, the father of Glauce, a crown of costliest workmanship.

The presents are accepted, but they are envenomed, and Glauce and her father expire in torments.

Surely this must be the end of the tragedy. No, the tigress is not yet appeased. One more blow remains to be dealt. Jason is wifeless. he shall be childless, too, before Medea leaves the land. But the tigress still retains the mother's heart, and here

occurs the scene which has no parallel in Greek tragedy. The mental conflict between the mother's affection for her children and her stern resolve to sacrifice them as a revenge upon her husband—this scene, in which fury and compassion alternate, and tears of tenderness dim the eyes blazing with ungovernable rage has cast a spell upon the heart of the world from which it can never shake itself entirely free.

She has disposed of the others without remorse, and without a tremor—but when she sits down to reconsider her last act of vengeance—the murder of her boys—then begins the tragic agony of her own soul.

We append a few passages from the translation of J. A. Symonds expressing Medea's maternal agony.

I shudder at the deed that will be done
Hereafter for my children I shall slay—
Mine there is none shall snatch them from me now

Why gaze you at me with your eyes my children?
Why smile your last sweet smile? Ah me! ah me!
What shall I do? My heart dissolves within me
Friends when I see the glad eyes of my sons!
I cannot. No my will that was so steady
Farewell to it. They too shall go with me
Why should I wound the sire with what wounds them
Heaping tenfold his woes on my own head?
No no I shall not. Perish my proud will
Yet whence this weakness? Do I wish to reap

The scorn that springs from enemies unpunished?
Dare it I must What craven fool am I,
To let soft thoughts flow trickling from my soul!
Go, boys, into the house, and he who may not
Be present at my solemn sacrifice—
Let him see to it My hand shall not falter

But since this path most piteous I tread,
Sending them forth on paths more piteous far,
I will embrace my children. O my sons,
Give—give your mother your dear hands to kiss!
O dearest hands, and mouths most dear to me,
And forms and noble faces of my sons!
Be happy even there what here was yours
Your father robs you of O loved embrace!
O tender touch and sweet breath of my boys!
Go, go, go, leave me! Lo I cannot bear
To look on you my woes have overwhelmed me!
Now know I all the ill I have to do,
But rage is stronger than my better mind—
Rage, cause of greatest crimes and grief to mortals

The deed is done. The innocents are sacrificed
Their tender forms are laced with blood, their
sweet eyes will look no more upon the sun Jason
bursts into the fatal chamber only to meet the
fury of his maddened wife She cries

'Twas not for thee, having so spurned my love,
To lead a merry life, flouting at me,
Nor yet for Glauce, neither was it his
Who gave her thee to wed unscathed, uncursed,
'To cast me from his realm And now, Jason,
If it so like thee, call me honest
For, as right bade me, have I clutched thy heart

The Moral Significance of Euripides

Before concluding our brief notice of this great Greek dramatist we must needs refer to his moral and religious significance

In the age of which we are writing it was the office of the Greek poet not merely to astonish and to thrill but also to instruct the people. The Greek dramatists regarded themselves as essentially moral and religious teachers, nay, almost as a sort of established clergy, bringing home the best truth they knew to men's minds in a manner far more striking and more powerful than that of the best and ablest modern preachers. Now, before the coming of Euripides the Homeric poems were regarded as a kind of Greek Bible. As philosophy and inquiry advanced, however, it was felt that the gods of Homer, in their fitfulness and passion and injustice, were unworthy of homage and of worship. They could not supply a stable foundation for reverence. They were unworthy of imitation. This Euripides saw, and, though he did not openly assail them, he led the way toward higher conceptions of the powers which govern human destiny. The gods of Homer were criminals, and Euripides evidently thought them so. In the legends of Homer the gods act as no good man

would act Euripides declares that these legends
are untrue Hence Iphigenia says

I think no Deity can be unjust

Bellerophon declares still more decidedly

If gods do aught that's base they are not gods

Heracles, when offered in his sorrow comfort from
the popular mythology, answers

I neither fancy gods love lawless beds,
Nor that with chains they bind each others hands,
Nor shall I be persuaded one is born
His fellows master! Since God stands in need—
If he is really God—of nought at all,
These are the poet's pitiful conceits

That on which Euripides insists is an overruling
Providence—a Providence making for right and
justice, and to which all men were amenable Hence
he says.

No sinner is self guarded against God

In the same vein his conviction of a divine justice
regnant in the world is expressed in the following
lines:

Thinkest thou
To overcome the wisdom of the gods?
That Justice has her dwelling far from man?
Nay, she is near, she sees, herself unseen,
And knows whom she must punish Thou knowest not
When she will bring swift ruin on the base
'Tis true the working of the gods is slow
But it is sure and strong

And not only is the divine justice insisted on, but
 also the divine benevolence Of the creative love
 of God he writes

Praise to the God who shaped in orders mould
 Our lives redeemed from chaos and the brute
 First by implanting reason giving then
 The tongue world herald to interpret speech
 Earth's fruit for food—for nurturing thereof
 Raindrops from heaven to feed earth's fosterlings
 And water her green bosom therewithal
 Shelter from storm and shadow from the heat

Again in a sentence of lovely import he says

No man is friendless who hath God for friend.

Self exiled from Athens for some reason which is
 not recorded Euripides died in his seventy sixth
 year at Pella the capital of Macedonia whither he
 had been invited by the reigning monarch Archelaus
 whose delight it was to attract to his court men of
 genius of every order When the poet was no
 more the Greeks with that tardy justice which
 would fain atone for the neglect of a great man
 when living by paying him reverence when dead
 sent envoys to Pella to bring home his remains
 But his host Archelaus would not part with them
 and buried them with much pomp and circumstance
 His countrymen therefore contented themselves
 by placing his bust in the Dionysiac theatre and
 erected on the road from the Peiraeus to the

Athenian capital a cenotaph bearing the following inscription :

To Hellas' bard all Hellas gives a tomb,
On Macedon's far shores his relics sleep,
Athens the pride of Greece, was erst his home
Whom now all praise, and all in common weep

ARISTOPHANES

DIED 380 B C

Say not twas but the satyr's leer
Or the rude cynic's freezing sneer
Which lurked behind his veiling mask
And marred his dedicated task
We rather in his scornful ire
Discern a patriotic fire
Which only stung that it might bless
And rouse a slumbering nobleness
In recreant Greeks who lost to shame
Trailed in the mire their ancient fame

R P D

The greatest comic poet of the world—J. A. SYMONDS

NOTHING human was alien to the subtle and many-sided genius of the ancient Greeks. Hence we go back to them for the well spring not only of tragedy, but of comedy. Though later in its full development than tragedy, comedy yet dwelt side by side with it from the time of Thespis who dates about 450 B.C. The company of actors who under his guidance visited the towns and villages of Greece contained wits and drolls as well as tragedians, who caught the manners as they rose and freely satirized the

magnates of the neighbourhood in which they took their stand

It is in Aristophanes that the genius of the old comedy appears in its culminating perfection. He was the greatest of those who consecrated piercing irony and broad buffoonery to noble ends, and so various and astonishing is the saturnalia of his wit that his name must be linked with those of Aeschylus Sophocles and Euripides.

Aristophanes was by birth a Rhodian though in early life he settled in Athens, and while still a youth of nineteen or twenty summers conscious of genius and loving his land 'with love far brought from out the storied past' he conceived the idea of using the comic stage first to rebuke and shame and then to elevate his degenerate fellow countrymen. A critic and reformer he used the weapon most likely to be effective upon the Athenians—dramatic poetry in the form of sprightly comedy. In his poem entitled *Aristophanes Apology* Robert Browning brings into full light and with a poet's keen and noble insight the deep philosophy underlying the sparkling surface of the comedies of the great Greek satirist. We take a few lines from his eulogy of one whose work and purpose have been gravely misunderstood.

Splendour of wit that springs a thunderball—
Satire—to burn and purify the world

True a m fair purpose, just wit justly strikes
 Injustice—right, as rightly quells the wrong
 Finds out in knaves, fools, cowards armoury
 The tricky tinselled place fire flashes through
 No damage else sagacious of true ore

Aristophanes was very popular with the Athenians and the factious and fickle temperament of the republic under which he lived afforded him unlimited opportunities for the exercise of his caustic wit

Attic comedy, as we have it in his plays, is a public commentary on the everyday life of Athens, alike in great things and in small. Politics and society, statesmen and soldiers, private citizens and blatant demagogues are criticized and lampooned with unsparing freedom. In later years the licence of comedy was restrained by legal enactment, but the Athens of the time of Aristophanes knew no respect for private life when it seemed to be good for the city that the vices or the follies of the citizens should be lashed.

The plays of this greatest of all comic poets are of a mixed order, and some of them are coarse and offensive but none can deny that the poet satirist held with relentless hand the mirror up to nature. Flesh and blood features and colouring are given to the skeleton of the historian and the Greeks of the poet's own time move before us in their intense

and many sided life The wife degraded into a mere plaything, the father, lamenting the profligacy of his son, the sophist striving to make the worse appear the better reason, the low demagogue ruling through the vices and follies of the people, the pleader, caring more for the frivolous debates of the law courts than for the destiny and threatened downfall of Athens—all these rise up before us, and indicate the causes through which the root of a once great republic died down into rottenness, and its blossom went up as dust

‘Such aims says Robert Browning—

Such aims—alone no matter for the means—
 Declare the unexampled excellence
 Of the first author—Aristophanes

That Aristophanes lacked reverence cannot be reasonably questioned The gods themselves were not immune from his stinging sarcasm and the only devil he seemed to fear was the devil of dullness But that Browning's estimate of him is after all the true one finds confirmation in the ancient tradition that we are indebted for the preservation of such of his plays as remain to us to no other than St John Chrysostom That celebrated father of the Church studied his works with delight, and not unfrequently imitated their language in his own writings

The Works of Aristophanes

Aristophanes supplied the dramatic festivals of ancient Greece with comedies, more or less successful for at least thirty seven years. Eleven of them still remain in a perfect state, and we have the titles of no fewer than fifty, of which some fragments only have survived the general wreck. His plays took the place of the political journals, the literary reviews, and the popular caricatures of the present day.

Aristophanes owes much to the magic of his diction and to those bursts of true poetic feeling which abound in his works. We cannot study his comedies without feeling that, if he could laugh like a clown and sting like a cockatrice he could also smile like an angel, and if Voltaire and Swift are his fittest modern representatives among the wits in the finer flights of his imagination and the perfect melody of his verse he frequently reminds us of Shelley or of Byron, with now and then a suggestion of the lyric sweetness and wild wood charm of Shakespeare. He is no mere comic poet. To quote once more from Browning, he knows

The enthusiastic mood which marks a man
 Muse-mad dream-drunken wrapt around by verse
 Encircled with poetic atmosphere
 As lark emballed by its own crystal song
 Or rose enmisted by the scent it makes

The two greatest comedies of Aristophanes are *The Birds* and *The Clouds*. It is not too much to say that for drollery of conception, beauty of language and variety of interest they stand unrivalled in the comedy of any age. The satire in *The Clouds* is directed against the Sophists, a school of philosophers in Athens whose aim he implies was to detect error rather than to establish certainty to propound questions rather than to answer them and to confound an opponent in preference to demonstrating truth. The term Sophist had come to mean in the popular language of Athens those who for pay undertook to teach a method of rhetoric and argument by which a man might prove anything whatever; hence the title of the comedy *The Clouds* symbolizing things which concealed and deceived, things which were shift and elusive, things misty, intangible, heaven obscuring, deceitfully beautiful, spreading illusion over earth and sky.

Before the curtain rises on one of the acts the Clouds are heard behind the stage chanting a choric hymn the full beauty of which mocks all efforts at translation.

Eternal clouds!
 Rise we to mortal view
 Embodied in bright shapes of deity sheen
 Leaving the depths serene

Where our loud-sounding Father Ocean dwells,
 For the wood-crownèd summit of the hills:
 Thence shall our glance command
 The beetling crags which sentinel the land,
 The teeming earth,
 The crops we bring to birth;
 Thence shall we hear
 The music of the ever-flowing streams,
 The low, deep thunders of the booming sea.
 Lo, the bright Eye of Day unwearied beams!
 Shedding our veil of storms
 From our immortal forms,
 We scan with keen-eyed gaze this nether sphere!¹

The chorus of Clouds now draws nearer, and pays,
 in song, the following tribute to the glory of
 Greece:

Sisters who bring the showers,
 Let us arise and greet
 This glorious land, for Pallas' dwelling meet,
 Rich in brave men, beloved of Cecrops old,
 Where Faith and Reverence reign,
 Where comes no foot profane,
 When for the mystic rights the Holy Doors unfold.
 There gifts are duly paid
 To the great gods, and pious prayers are said;
 Tall temples rise, and statues heavenly fair,
 There, at each holy tide,
 With coronals and song,
 The glad processions to the altars throng;
 There, in the jocund spring,
 Great Bacchus, festive king,
 With dance and tuneful flute his chorus leads along.¹

¹ Collins.

Such is a brief specimen of the poetry which pervades this wonderful comedy—the poet rising above the satirist

As an example of its loftier teaching, we append the lines in which its author calls upon a young Greek loungee and profligate to cast off his vices and choose the principles and the training which had made the men of Marathon—those splendid Greeks of the earlier time who had triumphed over the Persian foe

Cast in thy lot O youth with me
And choose the better paths—
So shalt thou hate the Forum's prate
And shun the lazy baths
Be shamed for what is truly shame
And blush when shame is said
And rise up from thy seat in hall
Before the hoary head
Be dutiful to thy parents
To no base act inclined
But keep fair honours' image deep
Within thy heart enshrined
And speak no rude irreverent word
Against thy father's years
Whose strong hand led thy infant steps
And dried thy childhood's tears¹

In addition to all this the play abounds in the broadest comedy, in which the Sophists are held up to every possible form of derision and denounced

¹ Collins

as the lying and unprincipled scoundrels of Athens

The Birds

This comedy transports us into one of the boldest and richest regions of the kingdom of fantasy. It is a medley of gay and sportive fancies full of allusions to the Athenian follies of the day and especially to the ill advised expedition against Sicily in which the power of Athens was broken like a wave before the walls of Syracuse.

Two citizens of Athens disgusted at the state of things in that city both politically and socially have set out in search of some hitherto undiscovered country where there shall be no lawsuits no informers no foolish wars no priests or poets lawyers or sycophants but everything shall be ordered on lines of wisdom justice and common sense. They have hired as guides a raven and a jackdaw and are led by them into the domain of the birds. At first the birds are strongly inclined to revenge themselves on them for the cruelties they have suffered at the hands of men. The two men however contrive to save themselves by proving the pre eminency of the birds over all other creatures. This tribute the birds are not slow to accept, and the irony and the poetry are alike self evident in the lines which run

Ye children of man! whose life is a span,
Protracted with sorrow from day to day,
Naked and featherless, feeble and querulous,
Sickly calamitous creatures of clay!
Attend to the words of the sovereign birds,
Immortal, illustrious lords of the air,
Who survey from on high, with a merciful eye,
Your struggles of misery, labour, and care
Whence you may learn and clearly discern
Such truths as attract your inquisitive turn¹

Their human visitors suggest that the birds should collect all their scattered powers into one immense state—that, in short, they should build a city in mid-air, with rulers and gods after their own image. The king of the birds falls in with the suggestion, and in the following lines summons a public meeting of his subjects to consider the proposal of the two Athenians :

Trioto trioto trioto, tobriv
Ye who in the marshy mead
On the sharp mosqu to feed
Ye who run amid the dew
In the herbage crisp and new —
Ye who skim the oceans breast
Hither hasten with the rest
Hither all ye birds that be
Come and listen come and see
 Heres arrived a clever man
 With a new and subtle plan
Hither all ye birds that be
Come and listen come and see¹

After some chattering consideration, during which the men are invested with wings to fit them, for their new society, the wondrous city, *Cloudecuckoo town*, is built above the earth. Then we have a series of clever and bitter satires upon this *Bird Utopia*, which glance down from it like keen arrows upon Athens. The shafts are aimed chiefly at the agitators, schemers, fools flatterers who led by Alcibiades, had been persuaded to undertake the ill starred expedition against Syracuse, under the delusion that it would secure for Hellas the empire of the Mediterranean and the victory over Carthage.

If the king of the birds and his subjects will but follow the advice of the adventurers from Athens, they will thus hold the balance of power in the universe.

From that position you'll command mankind
 And keep them in utter thorough subjugation—
 Just as you do the grasshoppers and locusts
 And if the gods offend you you'll blockade them
 And starve them to surrender

Thus was the warning voice of Aristophanes raised against the foolish ambitions which led to the calamities that followed in the train of the Greek scheme of Sicilian conquest

Three comedies of Aristophanes have been preserved which deal in a very trenchant fashion with the vexed and continually debated woman's question. With regard to the gentler sex—whose condition was the one great blot on the escutcheon of early Greek civilization—this poet did not rise above the judgement of his contemporaries. On the contrary he was manifestly unfair in his portrayals of woman. He was nevertheless obliged to acknowledge her power even in an age when she was scorned and slighted. Thus in a style which is remarkably modern he fills up an interval in one of his comedies with a song from a chorus of women which runs

They're always abusing the women
 As a terrible plague to men
 They say were the root of all evil
 And repeat it again and again—
 Of war and quarrels and bloodshed
 All mischief be what it may
 And pray then why do you marry us
 If we're all the plagues you say?

That is a fine touch in which an Athenian invites Plutus to his house, first assuring him that he is a man of unusual probity 'All men say that,' is the god's reply, 'but the moment they get hold of *me*, their probity goes to the winds.' Their conversation turns on the power of money, and the remarkable fact that, whilst of all things else there comes satiety, no man ever has riches enough.

We append a passage from the translation by Lucas Collins, in which two friends, named respectively Cario and Chremylus arraign Plutus as the source of most of the ills which burden the Athenian State.

Car Is't not your fault the Persian grows so proud?

Chr Do not men go to Parliament through you?

Car Who swells the navy estimates but you?

Chr Who subsidizes foreigners but you?

Car For want of you our friend there goes to jail

Chr Why are bad novels written but for you?

Car That league with Egypt was it not through you?

Chr And Lais loves that lout—and all for you?

Car And our new admiral's tower—

Chr (*impatiently to Cario*) May fall I trust

Upon your noisy head!—But in brief my friend

Are not all things that are done done for you?

For good or bad you are alone the cause

Aye and in war, that side is safe to win

Into whose scale you throw the golden weight

Pl Am I indeed so potent as all this?

Chr Yea by great Heaven and very much more than this
 Since none hath ever had his fill of you
 Of all things else there comes satiety

He pleaded most earnestly for a lasting peace after the more than twenty years of devastating war with Sparta. He cherished the fond dream of beholding Hellas united, of seeing simplicity restored to her education and manliness to her poetry and her arms, and though the dream was vain he pursued it with tireless consistency alike as an honest man and a very great poet.

A final word needs to be said concerning that coarseness and unblushing animalism of this great comedian, which has been carefully avoided in these pages. Defended it cannot be, though it may be explained by considering the curse which always accompanied the nature worship of Paganism, and which of necessity affected its literature. Christianity, by introducing a new conception of the physical relations of humanity by regarding the body as the temple of the spirit utterly rejected and repudiated this naked and barefaced indulgence of the lower appetites. The conscience of the world is changed and it cannot fall back upon its old animalism without unspeakable degradation. Henceforth we must needs

Move upward working out the beast
And let the ape and tiger die

PINDAR

DIED 442 B C

Silent is now the sacred course
Where Hellas' steeds once pawed the ground,
The victor and his eager horse
Are wrapped alike in sleep profound,
The polished shaft, the falchion bright,
Now mingle with earth's common clay,
And stern oblivion's fateful might
Has swept the shouting crowds away
But Pindar's steeds still bound along,
Untired as in their early prime,
And his keen shafts of radiant song
Fly hurtless through the fields of time

R P D

Ye powers that rule the Jyre! what god, what hero, what man,
shall we make famous?—PINDAR, *Second Olympian Ode*

THOSE were splendid hours for ancient Greece
which were devoted to the Olympian, Pythian,
Nemean, and Isthmian games. To the Athenian the
origin of the chief of these festivals—the Olympic—
was divine, the ground itself was holy, the religion
of the nation there found a fitting point of concentra-
tion. The games were opened by unveiling to public
view the incomparable statue of Jupiter Olympius

carved by the hand of Phidias Time was given for travellers from the various districts of Hellas to reach the capital and the trials of skill were inaugurated consecrated and glorified by religion dignified by patriotism and graced by the lofty ministry of song In one place Pindar speaks of 'all the holy place resounding with joy when on shrine and stadium the lovely light of the fair faced moon shone forth

Thus we see how noble a subject for poetry these national games afforded and how the poet's fiery pulse beat faster as he shared with the victors he celebrated the praises of assembled Greece Lyric poetry was to the Greek what music is to our churches as every church has its organist and choir so every considerable town in Greece had its professional poet and chorus And the lyrist like the organist was paid for his work

Most prominent of all these lyrists was the impassioned and splendour loving Pindar For him it was reserved to celebrate the praise of heroes with an opulence and a power unrivalled in the annals of his race His Odes of Victory are an embodied triumph And he was fully conscious of the value of his inspired service In one place he says 'Hereunto hath the muse been with me in the finding of a new device to fit to the Dorian step the voice of a hymn It was his proud

privilege to crown the victor, not with the laurels fading leaf alone, but with the immortality of splendid verse 'For the grace of the old time sleeps,' he says, 'and men forget it, save what hath been wedded to the glorious tide of song, and hath won the perfect meed of the minstrel's skill' With him the poet is heaven born Hence in the second Olympian Ode we read 'The bard is he whose mind is rich by nature's gift, men shaped by mere learning have sound and fury effecting nought, tis the chattering of crows against the godlike bird of Zeus' Again he writes 'Where the God is not a true instinct ever counsels silence.' As a patriot he praises the conqueror, 'lest any should abide by his mother's side, nursing the life that is without risk, and not even unto death find in company with his peers the noblest spur to valour To praise him is easy for a good man, since he did not quell the spirit of his youth by hiding it in a corner unknown to fame.' The proud consciousness that some of his odes were born for immortality throbs in many of his introductory sentences—as, for instance, where he says 'I build an indestructible treasure house for Xenocrates.' And not without reason did he thus preface some of his finer efforts, for they have outlived the waste and wreck of more than twenty centuries.

Birth and Career

From his biographers we learn that Pindar was born in Thebes or an adjacent village about 552 B.C. Of his private history very little is known except that he came from a noble family several members of which excelled in flute playing. Having received a musical education from an uncle he went while still a youth to study the lyre at Athens. Returning home at the age of twenty he established his reputation as a poet by a choral ode in celebration of the success of a young Thessalian at the Pythian games. From this time his fame spread throughout Greece and Sicily. As he sang the praises of the conquerors in those games at which kings and princes strove for the prize he acquired not only the applause of the people but also the patronage of the great. Hiero king of Syracuse was specially attached to the lyric poet who in turn repaid him by weaving his name into his immortal verse. Pindar lived for the most part in his native city Thebes and we have striking witness to the divinity which doth hedge the enduring kings of literature in the fact that the Spartans when they destroyed the walls and palaces of Thebes spared the house which Pindar had inhabited, and in yet later times the victorious Alexander when he had reduced the city to ashes

left the house of Pindar standing as an eloquent memorial of the might of creative genius

The light which Pindar sheds in his poems on the character of the Grecian games is very interesting. In one of his *Olympian Odes* we have a specimen of his manner where he gives a concise list of the winners in the various trials of skill

In the stadium best to the goal that pressed
Thy son Lycymnius shov'ed his speed
Aeon's leader of Midea's lost and I the Tegea made
the r' boast

In wrestling famed and the boxers' need
To Tiryus to win Doryclus bore
Mantinea Samus with coursers four
In the chariots won—Halrothus son

And all unerring flew bold Phrastor's spear
With strength unrivalled Eniclus flung
The massive stone in his grasp that swung
And loud and long was his comrades' cheer

In another ode he tells us how an ancient king of Libya chose a husband for his daughter

His daughter's spouse the Libyan found
Even thus in rich and proud array her place
Hard by the goal she took the race to guerdon
Meanwhile her sire proclaimed around
Who clasped her first should claim the prize.
Swift o'er the course Alexidamus flies
And seized her hand in his and bore
His bride thro' his hosts of horsemen ranging down
Full many a leaf and crown
And many a triumph plume was his before

His faith in the power of the lyre to soothe or to inspire is evidenced by the following stanzas, taken from the first Pythian Ode, and translated by Gilbert West

Hail golden lyre ! whose heav'n invented string
To Phoebus and the black haired nine belongs
Who in sweet chorus round their tuneful king
Mix with thy sounding chords their sacred songs
The dance gay queen of pleasure thee attends,
Thy jocund strains her listning feet inspire
And each melodious tongue its voice suspends,
Till thou great leader of the heavenly quire
With winton heart preluding giv'st the sign—
Swells the full concert then with harmony divine

His Poetic Fame

The poetic fame of Pindar suffers greatly in modern estimation from the fact that nearly all his finest work has perished, notably his series of thrilling hymns to the romantic deities of Greece. The reverence paid to him however, by antiquity attests his greatness. The tongue of legend singled him out as the special favourite of the gods. It was on his lips as he slept in childhood that a bee was said to have lit and gathered honey. He it was, according to tradition, who taught Pan his song and to whom Persephone came in a dream ten days before he died and told him that he would soon be with her to make a song for her. Hellas gave him a niche beside that of Homer in the temple of song. Plato and Cicero praised him to the echo and Horace selected his art as the very type of the inimitable.

Pindar differs from the ordinary Greek poet in a deeper sympathy with external nature. To use an exquisite image from Wordsworth. Beauty pitched her tents before him. He delights in the season when after dark winter the chamber of the hours is opened and delicate plants perceive the fragrant spring. He compares joy following sorrow to the bursting of the vernal earth into bloom. He writes of the lily flower that in its

trembling beauty had been 'filched from the ocean's foam' In bolder strain he thus describes an eruption of Mount Actna

By snowy Actna, nurse of endless frosts,
The pillared prop of heaven, for ever pressed,
Forth from whose nitrous caverns issuing rise
Pure liquid fountains of tempestuous fire,
And veil in ruddy mists the noon-day skies,
While wrapt in smoke the eddying flames aspire,
Or, gleaming through the night, with hideous roar,
Far o'er the reddening main huge rocky fragments pour.

Some of his finest illustrations are taken from the realm of nature—as, for example, the following, which, though it celebrates an athletic triumph, is yet of universal application

with the Argonauts, invokes 'the rushing strength of waves and winds, and the nights, and the paths of the deep,' the Greek words are chosen with such vivid mastery of suggestiveness that we seem to be ploughing before a gale the Southern Sea. Smoke rising at irregular intervals is said to 'kick the air. The fields, after lying fallow, 'clutch back their strength'. Telling how Ajax slew himself, he says 'it was envy that wrapped him round his brand. In another place he speaks of a victor 'rolling his vanquished foe about his sword'.

The first the greatest bliss on man conferred
 Is in the acts of virtue to excel
 The second to obtain their high reward
 The soul-exalting praise of doing well
 Who both these lots attains is blest indeed
 Since Fortune here below can give no richer meed

In another ode he thus writes of giving and withholding

I hate the miser whose unsocial breast
 Locks from the world his useless stores
 Wealth by the haughty only is enjoyed
 Whose treasures in diffusive good employed
 The rich returns of fame and friends procure
 And gainst a sad reverse a safe retreat ensure

That is a noble prayer in which he says

Grant me O Jove each crooked path to shun
 Simple and straight my honest race to run!
 So may mine be
 No name to tinge with shame my children's cheek!
 Gold lands let others seek I ask an honoured grave—
 The good to adorn
 And load the vile with scorn

Religiously also Pindar stood far above his associates. His poetry is pervaded with a sense of the divine in human thought and life. The things of the future are often on his lips. While the old Homeric conceptions of the gods are nowhere utterly repudiated by him he continually rises far above them. And not only so but in his writings the future life orbs itself into a definiteness untaught

before by any of the poets of Hellas whose thoughts have been preserved for us in literature. The soul he tells us, is from the gods, and what survives in the other world is the soul itself, no reduced, unconscious image

All by happy fate attain
The end that frees them from their pain,
And the body yields to death,
But the shape of vital breath
Still in life continueth

Yet further, Pindar cherished the beautiful belief that even in the realm of Hades the departed were gladdened by the happiness and success of their children. Hence in his eighth Olympian Ode he intimates that the praises given to the victor by assembled Greece not only rang through the air of Athens, but had power to pierce the dull, cold ear of the sepulchre

Even to the buried dead some share belongs
In the bright triumph songs
For sure not wholly do death's silent days
Bar the sweet access of our children's praise

The future existence is one of moral awards for the evil and the good—not for the exceptional few but for all. There is a discipline of expiation and purification alike in this world and in the next. Human life is brief but it is not bereft of majesty. 'What are we,' he writes—

What are we, great or lowly? Creatures of a day!
Mans but a phantom dream Yet in the gracious ray
Poured from on high, his life puts joy and glory on

Furthermore, the soul at death does not pass into a
dim limbo of forgetfulness

But in the happy fields of light,
Where Phoebus, with an equal ray,
Illuminates the balmy night,
And gilds the cloudless day,
In peaceful, unmolested joy,
The good their smiling hours employ
Them no uneasy wants constrain,
To vex th ungrateful soil—
To tempt the dangers of the billowy main,
— And break their strength with unabating toil,
A frail, disastrous being to maintain
But in their joyous, calm abodes
The recompense of justice they receive,
And in the fellowship of gods
Without a tear eternal ages live,
While, banished by the Fates from joy and rest,
Intolerable woes the impious soul invest

After his death Pindar received more than heroic
honours At Delphi the iron chair in which he sat
was kept as a sacred relic At Rhodes one of his
odes was carved upon the temple walls of Pallas
At Athens a statue was erected in his honour at
the public cost.

inculcate moderation in all things and freedom from those vain desires which are 'the constant hectic of the fool'—all these have placed him high in the estimation of those who prize the best which has been said and written. No man who ever lived knew so well how and when to say the most delicate, the most good natured, and the wisest things. Like all the greater poets, Horace reflects his age as well as moulds it, and yet he is not for an age, but for all time, since he deals with principles of action which recur wherever civilized men are found. He opens for us the doors of the Roman houses as they were when Virgil and Pollio walked in company up the long, white street, and yet his counsels are as fresh and apposite as if he conversed with us to day under the portico of a London club or a New York hotel.

Take, for example, a few verses from the poem, translated by Dryden, in which he teaches the lesson that to-day alone is ours and that to live wisely and with becoming self-restraint from day to day is the true philosophy of life.

Most wisely Jove in thickest night
The issues of the future veils
And laughs at the self-torturing wight
Who with imagined terrors quails
The present only is thine own,
Then use it well, ere it has flown

Lord of himself that man will be
 And happy in his life alway
 Who still at eve can say with free
 Contented soul I've lived to-day!
 Let Jove to-morrow if he will
 With blackest clouds the welkin fill
 Or flood it all with sunlight pure
 Yet from the past he cannot take
 Its influence for that is sure
 Nor can he mar or bootless make
 Whatever of rapture and delight
 The hours have borne us in the flight.

In Horace as in Virgil we trace the power of Greece. Many of his ablest productions are adaptations from Greek models. Yet all that he has written is so enlivened by his own wisdom and keen love of the beautiful and the true that we forgive him all he owes to his Athenian masters because of the flavour and the charm imparted by his own creative personality. With consummate skill he brings in his lyrics the music of Greece into the language of Rome. The stately pomp of the Latin tongue solemn and grand as the tread of its legions is suffused with the delicacy and the grace which fell from the lyres of Sappho and Alcæus and the lordly Roman is proud to note how under that breath of genius which is the breath of heaven the heavy swinging waves of his native speech can break into ripples of pleasant laughter and rhythmic pulses of melodious song.

Personal History

This wisest poet of the golden age of Augustus—who as he could survey wealth and luxury without envy, so he could dispense with it without regret—sprang from the ranks of the people. His father was a freed slave who had purchased a small farm near Venusium in Apulia, where the poet was born on December 8 65 B.C. As though conscious that his son was born to greatness, his father conferred upon him a liberal education. He first accompanied the boy, when he was as yet but twelve years old, to Rome to have him instructed in every branch of culture, and in his twentieth year in accordance with the prevailing custom he was sent to Athens which was then the capital of literature and philosophy, as Rome was of political power. Furthermore his father himself superintended his studies and moulded him to habits of wisdom and virtue by showing him the results of folly and vice. We cannot wonder that Horace was nobly proud of such a father, or that he should refer to him with filial reverence when he moved in the first society of the empire. Hence, in a poem addressed to Maecenas, we find the following passages

If no man may arraign me of the vice
Of lewdness meanness nor of avarice

If pure and innocent I live and dear
 To those I love (self praise is venial here)
 All this I owe my father

Further on he assures his patron that, if he could have chosen his own ancestry, he would not have desired any other than that which had been allotted him

Reason must fall me ere I cease to own
 With pride that I have such a father known
 Nor shall I stoop my birth to vindicate
 By charging like the herd the wrong on fate
 That I was not of noble lineage sprung
 Far other creed inspires my heart and tongue
 For now should nature bid all living men
 Retrace their years and live them o'er again
 Each culling as his inclination bent
 His parents for himself with mine content
 I would not choose whom men endow as great
 With the insignia and seats of state

In the year 44 B.C. Caesar fell beneath the daggers of his assassins and Brutus went to Athens with the view of securing the interest of the young patricians there. Horace at his instigation quitted the academy to command one of the legions of the republic. It was speedily, however apparent that his fit weapon was the pen and not the sword for in the defeat of Brutus at Philippi he by his own confession ingloriously flung away his shield and took refuge in flight. On returning to Rome he found his father was dead and his property

confiscated The question now arose as to how he was to gain a living, and he provides the answer where he says

Bated in spirit and with pinions clipped,
Of all the means my father left me stripped,
- Want stared me in the face, so then and there
I took to scribbling verse in sheer despair

As personal satire is always popular, his early productions were chiefly satirical. Some of these were charged with a bitterness which was little less than merciless, creating lifelong enmities, while their remembrance was a sigh.

Horace, in our judgement, excels most as a poet when he assumes the dignity of a patriot. His odes throb with a grander music when he exercises the charm of poesy to open the dim eyes of rulers to the majesty of justice, to allay the dangerous passions of the people, or to plead for the safety of the Roman Empire. Such lines as those which follow, on 'The Ship of State,' translated by Sir Stephen Vere de Vere, give us the poet at his best.


Thy shrouds are burst thy sails are torn
 And through thy gaping ribs forlorn
 The floods remorseless pour
 Dare not to call for aid on powers divine—
 Dishonoured once they hear no more
 Nor boast majestic pine
 Daughter of Pontic forests
 Thy great name
 Old lineage well-earned fame
 The honours of thy sculptured prow—
 Sport of the mocking winds, nor feared nor trusted now!
 Alas! my country long my anxious care
 Source now of bitter pain and fond regret!
 Thy stars obscured thy course beset
 By rocks unseen beware!
 Trust not soft winds and treacherous seas
 Or the false glitter of the Cyclades

It is believed that Horace enjoyed the friendship of Augustus Caesar—that indeed he was one of the chosen advisers of the great emperor. If this was so we do not hesitate to affirm that the emperor was his debtor owing more to Horace than by any possibility the poet could owe to him. All monuments to Augustus Caesar are either defaced or buried but in the verse of Virgil and of Horace he boasts a fame which defies the envious tooth of time. Of this indebtedness of the monarch to the bard Horace seems to have been fully conscious. Hence, the lines

Before great Agamemnon reigned
 Reigned kings as great as he and brave
 Whose huge ambitions now contained
 In the small compass of a grave

In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown ;
 No bard had they to make all time their own.
 In earth, if it forgotten lies,
 What is the valour of the brave ?
 What difference, when the coward dies,
 And sinks in silence to the grave ?

Horace was preserved by his natural good sense from attempting too high a flight in poesy. He knew his limitations, and did not seek to transcend them. He does not hope to rival the mighty masters on whose works his genius has been fed. Hence he writes :

 To think of adding to the mighty throng
 Of the great paragons of Grecian song
 Were no less mad an act than his who should
 Into a forest carry logs of wood.

On all his work, however, we find the stamp of a great poetic artist. The productions of our own Tennyson are not more finished or more finely moulded than the odes and epistles of this Latin poet. Nothing which is slight or slovenly comes from his pen. His canon of composition is expressed in those lines contained in one of his satires :

Such an audience Horace has never lacked Dante and Montaigne, Fénelon and Bossuet, Hooker and Chesterfield, Boileau and Wordsworth, alike acknowledge his power, and William Ewart Gladstone turned aside from the cares of state to master the reflective wisdom of the Latin poet and to weave it into rhythmic music for English readers

Friendship with Maecenas

In the year 39 B C Varius and Virgil introduced Horace to Maecenas, who was already famous as a most generous patron of men of letters. Horace has given a modest account of this interview in the same satire in which he recalls his origin and boyhood. The great minister answered in a few words his bashful speech, and after waiting for nine months gave him his affectionate confidence. The friendship sealed on that day, and only interrupted after twenty years by death is one of the most beautiful in the annals of literature.

Nor was the distinguished patron of letters though a Roman exquisite and man of the period, unworthy of the respect and love which Horace cherished with regard to him. There were noble qualities in Maecenas which endeared him to all who possessed an answering nobleness. For example as Sir Theodore Martin shows in his

charming sketch of Horace, the accomplished courtier set his face against the system of cruelty and extermination which disgraced the Triumvirate. When Octavius was one day condemning man after man to death Maecenas, after a vain attempt to reach him on the tribunal, where he sat surrounded by a dense crowd, wrote upon his tablets *Surge tandem Carnifex!*—'Butcher, break off!—and flung them across the crowd into the lap of Caesar who felt the rebuke and immediately quitted the judgement seat.

Had the faults of Maecenas however been more conspicuous than they were, the genial kindness and the large charity of Horace would have condoned them. Satirist though he was he claimed for friendship the privilege of large and generous allowances. He held that the friend, like the lover, should be blind to the defects which the enemy is so keen to mark and we do not wonder that the poet was so dear to many of the best men of his time when we study the following humorous and forceful lines from his pen on the amenities of friendship.

True love we know is blind defects that blight
The loved ones charms escape the lovers sight—
Nay pass for beauties as Balbinus shows
A passion for the wen of Agnas nose
Oh with our friendships that we did the same
And screened our blindness under virtues name!

For we are bound to treat a friend's defect
 With touch most tender and a fond respect
 Even as a father treats a child's who hints
 The urchin's eyes are roguish, if he squints,
 Or if he be as stunted short, and thick
 As Sisyphus the dwarf, will call him 'chuck',
 If crooked all ways, in back, in legs, and thighs,
 With softening phrases will the flaw disguise
 So if one friend too close a fist betrays,
 Let us ascribe it to his frugal ways,
 Or is another—such we often find—
 To flippant jest and braggart talk inclined?
 'Tis only from a kindly wish to try
 To make the time amongst friends go lightly by,
 Another's tongue is rough and over free—
 Let's call it bluntness and sincerity,
 Another's choleric—him we must screen
 As cursed with feelings for his peace too keen.
 This is the course methinks that makes a friend
 And having made, secures him to the end¹

The Sabine Farm

It was from Maecenas that Horace received the gift of that Sabine farm which has been associated in the memory of the world with the happiest days of the poet's life. Horace is never weary of singing the praises of his mountain home, which lay in the midst of wild and picturesque scenery thirty miles distant from Rome and twelve from Tivoli.

Sheltered there in that quiet nook, amidst the

¹ Sir Theodore Martin

song of birds and the gleam of waters, Nature infused into his verse all the magic of her music and all the freshness of her perennial youth Training his vines, or battling with the swollen brook, or stretched on the greensward by the river, he forgot the tumult and the shame of Rome, and envied none, however great, who dwelt within its walls The simple peasantry, gathering their dues of wheat and wine and oil, had for him a deeper interest than the Grecianized fops who strolled down the Via Appia, and the lilies of the field were lovelier than Lydia or Barin , as, in all the glory of their superb toilettes, they rolled in their chariots down the Via Sacra With what attractive music does he, amid these sylvan solitudes, sing of the charms of a country life !

Happy the man in busy schemes unskilled
Who living simply like our sires of old,
Tills the few acres which his father tilled
Vexed by no thoughts of usury or gold

The shrilling clarion neer his slumber mars
Nor quails he at the howl of angry seas,
He shuns the forum with its wordy jars
Nor at a great mans door consents to freeze

The tender vine shoots, budding into life
He with the stately poplar tree doth wed
Lopping the fruitless branches with his knife
And grafting shoots of promise in their stead,

Or in some valley up among the hills
 Watches his wandering herds of lowing kine
 Or fragrant jars with liquid honey fills 2
 Or shears his silly sheep in sunny shine

And streams the while glide on with murmurs low
 And birds are singing among the thickets deep
 And fountains babble, sparkling as they flow
 And with their noise invite to gentle sleep.

Ever and anon recalled to Rome by the charms
 of friendship and by the associations created by his
 merited fame as a writer and a critic he yet dwells
 in the imperial city

Not without many a wish and sigh •
 When—when shall I the country see
 Its woodlands green—oh! when be free
 With books of great old men and sleep
 And hours of dreamy ease, to creep
 Into oblivion sweet of life
 Its agitations and its strife?

country conserved it, and that but for the streams of untainted and vigorous youth which were ever flowing toward Rome, the centre of the empire, the glow of health would vanish from its cheek, the might of valour wither in its arm

In many a graceful stanza he celebrates the wisdom and the safety of a lowly life which in fellowship with external nature stands apart from the fever of the city and the fascination of the court, and thus escapes the perils incident to high ambitions

- . Licinius would you live with ease,
- Tempt not too far the faithless seas,
And when you hear the tempest roar,
Press not too near th unequal shore
The man within the golden mean
Who can his boldest wish contain,
Securely views the ruined cell
Where sordid want and sorrow dwell
And, in himself serenely great
Declines an envied room of state
When high in air the pine ascends
To every ruder blast it bends
The palace falls with heavier weight,
When tumbling from its airy height,
And when from heaven the lightning flies
It blasts the hills that proudest rise

Nor must it be inferred from lines like these that Horace commended and approved a life which in the luxury of a calm retreat stood apart from the great duties which are demanded from a worthy

He better claims the glorious name who knows
With wisdom to enjoy what Heaven bestows

Who knows the wrongs of want to bear,
Even in its lowest last extreme,

Yet can with conscious virtue fear

Far worse than death a deed of shame,
Undaunted for his country or his friend
To sacrifice his life—oh glorious end!

It is without question that Horace descended on his age not merely to please but to ennoble it. In his youth it is evident that he was not free from the prevalent vices. He had adopted the Epicurean creed, and loose conduct followed as a natural result. But as youth deepened into manhood, sensualism lost its power to charm—nay, it became utterly abhorrent to his nature, and he struggled towards a purer ideal. Virtue asserted its nobler influence, and religion followed with its sanctities and with the recognition of that stainless Power who cannot regard iniquity with allowance, and in whose presence to quote the poet's own words,

The costliest sacrifice that wealth can make
From the incensed Penates less commands
A soft response than doth the poorest cake
If on the altar laid with spotless hands

In his pleadings amid the vices of a corrupt and decaying empire, for purer and simpler living Horace is specially attractive. Without the slightest

8 B.C., is supposed to have hastened that of the poet himself, who died on the twenty seventh of the same month. He was so much reduced in his last illness as to be unable to sign his will, but with his last words he declared Augustus his heir. All that was mortal of the great poet was buried in the Esquiline Mount near the tomb of Maecenas, and the emperor erected a noble monument in honour of the man whose genius had shed a more brilliant lustre on his reign than all his munificent patronage of the arts or all his splendid victories. With reverent hands we place our laurel leaf upon the grave of Horace and as we turn away, his lines addressed to Dellius haunt us with their music and impress us by their wisdom.

Let not the frowns of fate
 Dismay thee my friend
 Nor when she smiles on thee do thou elate
 With vaunting thoughts ascend
 Beyond the limits of becoming mirth,
 For Dellius thou must die become a clod of earth

One road and to one bourne
 We all are goaded. Late
 Or soon will issue from the urn
 Of unrelenting Fate
 The lot that in yon bark exiles us all
 To an unequal shore from which is no recall

Keep a rein on your passions and vain ambitions,
and seek delight in the beauty of nature and
the charms of poesy As for him, he is resolved
on plain living and high thinking

Absorbed in lofty meditations, feeding on great
thoughts, and living happily on 'herbs and frugal
fare, he will cōvet only

Worth which heavens gate to those unbars
Who never should have died
A pathway cleaves among the stars
To meaner souls denied

• • *Sententious Wisdom*

A notable feature in the poetry of Horace is
presented in those flashes of sententious wisdom
into which there is frequently crushed a wealth
of experience with regard to the conduct of life
which all may ponder with profit and advantage
He is not poet merely, but philosopher, and while
he seldom rises to the sanctities of religion, some
of the virtues he inculcates are not far removed
from those high levels 'where God Himself is moon
and sun

It is not too much to say that an almost com-
plete breviary for the guidance of men in practical
and mundane life might be selected from his
works We will, however, content ourselves with
the following

He who implores forgiveness from his brother
Should be prepared to grant it to another

Oh, wherefore will you carelessly pass by
Your own worst vices with unheeding eye -
While others faults are with a vision seen
Strong as an angels ken or dragons beam?

Who knows that Heaven with ever-bounteous power
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour?

The more we to ourselves deny
The more the gods our wants supply

Though of exact perfection you despair
Yet every step to virtue's worth your care

Though I ring Virtue we too oft despise
We follow her when dead with envious eyes

How swiftly glide our flying years!
Alas! nor pity nor tears
Can stop the fleeting day,
Deep furrowed wrinkles posting age
And death's unconquerable rage
Are strangers to delay

The man in conscious virtue bold
Who dares his secret purpose hold
Unshaken hears the crowds tumultuous cries
And the impetuous tyrant's angry brow defies
Let the wild winds that rule the seas
Tempestuous all their horrors raise
Let Jove's dread arm with thunders rend the spheres
Beneath the crash of worlds undaunted he appears

The death of his generous friend Maecenas
which took place in the beginning of November,

8 B.C., is supposed to have hastened that of the poet himself, who died on the twenty-seventh of the same month. He was so much reduced in his last illness as to be unable to sign his will, but with his last words he declared Augustus his heir. All that was mortal of the great poet was buried in the Esquiline Mount, near the tomb of Maecenas, and the emperor erected a noble monument in honour of the man whose genius had shed a more brilliant lustre on his reign than all his munificent patronage of the arts or all his splendid victories. With reverent hands we place our laurel leaf upon the grave of Horace, and, as we turn away, his lines addressed to Dellius haunt us with their music and impress us by their wisdom :

Let not the frowns of fate
Disquiet thee, my friend ;
Nor, when she smiles on thee, do thou, elate
With vaunting thoughts, ascend
Beyond the limits of becoming mirth ;
For, Dellius, thou must die, become a clod of earth.

One road and to one bourne
We all are goaded. Late
Or soon will issue from the urn
Of unrelenting Fate
The lot, that in yon bark exiles us all
To undiscovered shores, from which is no recall.

He who implores forgiveness from his brother
Should be prepared to grant it to another

Oh, wherefore will you carelessly pass by
Your own worst vices with unheeding eye
While others faults are with a vis on seen
Strong as an angels ken or dragons beam?

Who knows that Heaven with ever-bounteous power
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour?

The more we to ourselves deny
The more the gods our wants supply

Though of exact perfection you despair
Let every step to virtue's worth your care

Though living Virtue we too oft despise
We follow her when dead with envious eyes

How swiftly glide our flying years!
Alas! nor piety nor tears
Can stop the fleeting day
Deep-furrowed wrinkles portending age
And death's unconquerable rage
Are strangers to delay

The man in conscious virtue bold
Who dares his secret purpose hold
Unshaken hears the crowds tumultuous cries
And the impetuous tyrant's angry brow defies
Let the wild winds that rule the seas
Tempestuous all their horrors raise
Let Jove's dread arm with thunders rend the spheres
Beneath the crash of worlds undaunted he appears

The death of his generous friend Maecenas
which took place in the beginning of November,

8 B.C., is supposed to have hastened that of the poet himself, who died on the twenty seventh of the same month. He was so much reduced in his last illness as to be unable to sign his will, but with his last words he declared Augustus his heir. All that was mortal of the great poet was buried in the Esquiline Mount, near the tomb of Maecenas, and the emperor erected a noble monument in honour of the man whose genius had shed a more brilliant lustre on his reign than all his munificent patronage of the arts or all his splendid victories. With reverent hands we place our laurel leaf upon the grave of Horace, and, as we turn away, his lines addressed to Dellius haunt us with their music and impress us by their wisdom.

Let not the frowns of fate
 Disquiet thee my friend,
 Nor when she smiles on thee do thou elate
 With vaunting thoughts, ascend
 Beyond the limits of becoming mirth
 For, Dellius thou must die become a clod of earth

One road and to one bourne
 We all are goaded. Late
 Or soon will issue from the urn
 Of unrelenting Fate
 The lot, that in yon bark exiles us all
 To undiscovered shores from which is no recall.

PETRARCH

Accomplished master of impassioned song
Mighty to tune and strike the poet's lyre,
Whose melodies, at once serene and strong
Are all aflame with love's celestial fire,
Well may thy Italy revere thy name
And place it high upon her scroll of fame

Exiled and lone the Graces sought a shrine,
Where they might sweetly and securely rest,
They found it in that radiant soul of thine,
Of every lovely quality possessed
Whence thence their spell went forth a quickening breath,
Chasing from Europe the chill glooms of death

R. P. D.

IN Petrarch we approach a master of enchanting verse cast in another mould than that of Dante. There is little doubt that, despite his ideal love for Beatrice the personality of Dante was proud, stern, and repellent. Great he undoubtedly was—almost, indeed, without a parallel in literature—but his was a cold, scornful isolated greatness. He rises before our fancy like an icy Alpine peak in a day of storm—magnificent, but solitary and awe inspiring.

In Petrarch we have a man of another tempera-

ment—tender, humane, sympathetic, nursing his poetic dreams, not in bitter loneliness, but amid the gardens of princes, the applause of kindly cities, the smiles of women, and the pleasant ways of men. In Dante we have a soul self-possessed, mighty, imperious, awful, and a genius which cleaves to the heart of its subject like lightning: in Petrarch we have a soul of smaller compass, markedly self-conscious, and a genius which flutters about its subject like the bee about the flower. Dante globed the universe in his mighty mind: Petrarch found his hell, his purgatory, and his paradise in the frown or smile of one woman. Dante essayed a theme in which he had no predecessors and no models for imitation: Petrarch caught up the dying music of the troubadours of Languedoc and Provence, and prolonged it for a later generation. Dante dominates the world of literature by his visions of the sublime and the terrible: Petrarch keeps his place by the beauty and the melody of his language. Both, after the manner of men of true genius, summed up and expressed their own period—the age in which they lived and wrote. But the age of Dante was the mediæval age, with its gloom and mystery and bitterness, its colossal portents of eternal destiny, its theologic narrowness and hate. The age of Petrarch, on the other hand, was the age of the dawning Renaissance,

the resurrection of olden culture with its growing light of science and philosophy its freedom from fettering dogmas its quickened sense of the beautiful in art and nature its gladder outlook and its widening humanitarian spirit

Francesco Petrarch one of the four most renowned poets of Italy was born at Arezzo in Tuscany in July 1304 He was the son of a Florentine who like Dante had been exiled from his native city For years the exile cherished the hope of return but by the death of Henry VII a final blow was given to the prospects of the Ghibellines and the elder Petrarch withdrew to Avignon where under Clement V the papal court held its state Here the young Petrarch was carefully educated and was subsequently sent by his father to Bologna to study for the law But the born poet found Cicero and Virgil more attractive than legal documents and began to form a library of ancient classic manuscripts over which he pored with the deepest interest His father keenly resented this passionate devotion to literature rather than to law but his death put an end to the conflict between inclination and filial duty Petrarch then took orders in the Church as a means of living and became a favourite companion of the nobles and ecclesiastics who thronged the brilliant court of the supreme pontiff

Petrarch's Laura

It was on Monday, April 6, 1327, in Holy Week, that in the church of St Clara, in Avignon, Petrarch first beheld that incomparable golden haired Laura, who for twenty one years swayed the current of his life whose eyes and voice, habitual reserve and tender pity, inspired poem after poem, and from whose thrall not even the lady's death availed to release him. Her bare white hand and dainty glove, her sweet speech and silvery laugh her tears, her paleness, her modest salutations are all noted with untiring minuteness. At a bound she ascends the throne of the poet's heart and he has made her immortal by weaving her name into sonnets which are as spells and which break upon the ear like music.

Gifted as he was with an exquisite power of expression, we instinctively feel that the love of the poet is greatly enhanced by the pleasure he finds in transfusing it into verse. Indeed in his very first sonnet he begs as with a blush upon his cheek, the indulgence of the world for the claim he is making on its sympathy by his sighs and tears.

In partial explanation of this passionate devotion to one with whom he had little if any private intercourse, we must remember that romantic devotion to a well known beauty was a characteristic of the

age of chivalry, not yet extinct in Petrarch's time. The twofold enthusiasm which had for its motto, 'My God and my Lady,' produced and blended a peculiar worship in the soul of the chivalrous lover. His lady was the living symbol of heavenly beauty and heavenly mindedness and stood between his soul and God as a refining and ennobling influence.

We trace this in the love of Dante for Beatrice, of which he says that it 'raised him above' all vile things, and this elevating power of a pure passion is scarcely less marked in the case of Petrarch. A few lines from his lament over the death of Laura show this

Alas fair face! alas the sweet regard!
 Alas the mien of graceful dignity!
 Alas the speech which natures fierce and hard
 Made gentle, and bade vile ones valiant be!

It is without question that both these poets of emotional Italy cherished an ideal love pure from sensual passion, by means of which they were stirred to noble effort—only in these instances the lovers did not ride to the tournament with lance in rest to vindicate by feats of arms the depth and sincerity of their devotion, but enshrined it in immortal verse.

The love of Petrarch for the woman he idealized is expressed by him in his sonnets with a force so musical and so magical that his *Canzoniere* may be said to form for all ages an inspired preface

to the Book of Love. Every mood of love's enrapturing passion is caught and fixed in his verse. The most evanescent shades of tender feeling are delicately and minutely expressed. Each chord of Love's sweet lyre is struck and yields its music. The fluctuations of hope and despair, the struggle of passion and desire with reason and conscience, the conflict of languorous longing with ideal purity, the rapture of the loved one's presence when ecstasy almost quivers into agony, the unrest at the loved one's absence when earth and sky are darkened as by the sun's eclipse—all these varied emotions are depicted by a master-hand.

In order to appreciate the full beauty of Petrarch's sonnets, it would be necessary to chronicle the history and stages of his passion, and to assign to each poetic gem its natural setting. Thus only could we adequately appraise the poems which enchanted his native Italy, and whose spell is felt by lovers of the beautiful in every land. Our space, however, admits only of a few specimens from the translation by Lady Dacre.

The first utters in plaintive music the depth of the poet's adoration :

If on the brow each pang portrayed to bear
 Or from the heart low broken sounds to draw
 Withheld by shame or checked by pious awe
 If on the faded cheek love's hue to wear
 If than myself to hold one far more dear
 If sighs that cease not tears that ever flow
 Wrung from the heart by all loves various woe
 In absence if consumed and chilled when near—
 If these be ills in which I waste my prime
 Though I the sufferer be yours lady is the crime

The succeeding sonnet was written when the beauty of Laura had already begun to fade, yet she still holds the soul of Petrarch by a spell which defies the ravages of time

Waved to the winds were those long locks of gold
 Which in a thousand burnished ringlets flowed
 And the sweet light beyond all measure glowed
 Of those far eyes which I no more behold
 Nor (so it seemed) that face aught harsh or cold
 To me (if true or false I know not) showed
 Me in whose breast the amorous lure abode
 If flames consumed what marvel to unfold?
 That step of hers was of no mortal guise
 But of angelic nature and her tongue
 Had other utterance than of human sounds
 A living sun a spirit of the skies
 I saw her—now perhaps not so—but wounds
 Heal not for that the bow is since unstrung

The following lines were written after the death of Laura which took place in her forty first year

Those eyes my bright and glowing theme crevice
 That arm those hands that lovely foot that face

Whose view was wont my fancy to beguile,
And raise me high o'er all of human race,
Those golden locks that flowed in liquid grace
And the sweet lightning of that angel smile,
Which made a paradise of every place —
What are they? Dust insensible and vile!
And yet I live! oh grief! oh rage! oh shame!
Rest of the guiding star I loved so long
A shipwrecked bark which storms of woes assail;
Be this the limit of my amorous song
Quenched in my bosom is the sacred flame
And my harp murmurs its expiring wail

Whether Petrarch's Laura returned or requited his passion is not recorded. They appear very seldom to have held* any personal intercourse and it is clear that Petrarch was not admitted to her house. But the lovely lines in which the object of his idolatry is represented as coming to her worshipper after death in a dream and making a modest confession of her love seem to lead to the conclusion that Petrarch cherished the idea that, had she not been the wife of another they might have been united and thus blest.

Scarce with dry cheek
 These tender words I heard her speak
 'Were they but true! I cried She bent her head
 Not unreprouchfully, and said,
 'Yes I did love thee, and whene'er
 I turned away my eyes 'twas shame and fear
 A thousand times to thee did they incline
 But sank before the flame that shot from thine.'

He who can read this exquisite canzone unmoved
 never experienced a love which could not be requited
 without dishonour; and never stretched out empty
 arms of longing and desire into a great unanswering
 darkness

Petrarch at Vacluse * * *

When tired of the pomps of princes, chafed by
 the world, or possessed by a longing for solitude
 it was the habit of Petrarch to retire to a cottage
 at Vacluse, a rural retreat fifteen miles distant
 from Avignon This spot is one of exquisite beauty,
 standing as it does in a valley enriched with
 vineyards, gardens, and corn fields, encircled by softly
 swelling hills, and watered by the Sorgia a stream
 as the poet tells us 'of liquid crystal, the murmurs
 of which mingle with the songs of birds to fill
 the air with harmony

To this 'well known haven of his soul' Petrarch
 would frequently fly from the haunts of men,
 listening only to the voices of nature, seeing only
 the landscape and the sky, and absorbed in those

sessions of silent thought which are the bliss of solitude The lines placed in the lips of the Carthaginian hero, in his poem entitled 'Africa,' were here appropriate to Petrarch himself:

I ever sought a life of solitude—
 This know the shores, and every lawn and wood
 To fly from those deaf spirits and blind away,
 Who from the path of heaven have gone astray

Yet here, as we learn from many a sonnet and canzonet, the image of Laura continually intrudes upon his thought He cannot break away from her fascination and her charm The leaves are tongues which syllable her name The flowers remind him of her grace and loveliness Her voice is in the breeze and in the waterfall Morning is radiant with her smile, and when night comes on and all its lamps are kindled, he is ready to say, in lines attributed by literary tradition to Plato

Thou lookest on the stars, dear one Ah me!
 I would I were a star, that I might look on thee

In a degree rare amongst the poets of the mediæval period, Petrarch expresses that love of Nature in all her changing moods which has found its ultimate and perfect voice in our own Wordsworth Dante has given us in his 'mystic, unfathomable song' wonderful touches of description

of things in Nature. He uses them, however, like Shakespeare, only as accessories to some other thought and in the working out of his dominant theme. But, with Petrararch, beauty is its own excuse for being.

The following lines, from one of his canzonets, where the melody of his verse has a freer course than in his sonnets, may help us to realize his delight in the scenes amid which he loved to meditate in the dreamy ecstasy of his ill-fated passion.

In the still evening, when with rapid flight
 Low in the western sky the sun descends
 To give expectant nations life and light,
 The aged pilgrim in some clime unknown
 Slow journeying, right onward fearful bends
 With weary haste, a stranger and alone,
 Yet when his labour ends
 He solitary sleeps,
 And in short slumber steeps
 Each sense of sorrow hanging on the day
 And all the toil of the long passed way
 But oh! each pang that wakes with morn's first ray,
 More piercing wounds my breast
 When Heaven's eternal light sinks crimson in the west

His burning wheels when downward Phoebus bends
 And leaves the world to night its lengthened shade
 Each towering mountain o'er the vale extends,
 The thrifty peasant shoulders light his spade,
 With sylvan carol gay and uncouth note
 Bidding his cares upon the wild winds float,

Content in peace to share
 His poor and humble fare
 As in that golden age
 We honour still yet leave its simple ways,
 Whoever so list let joy his hours engage
 No gladness e'er has cheered my gloomy days
 Nor moments of repose
 However rolled the spheres whatever planet rose,
 When as the shepherd marks the sloping ray
 Of the great orb that sinks in ocean's bed
 While in the east soft steals the evening grey
 He rises and resumes the accustomed crook
 Quitting the beechen grove the field the brook,
 And gently homeward drives the flock he fed
 Then far from human tread,
 In lonely hut or cave
 O'er which the green fountains wave
 In sleep without a thought he lays his head
 Ah! cruel Love! at this dark silent hour
 Thou wak'st to trace and with redoubled power,
 The voice, the step the air
 Of her who scorns thy chains and flies thy fatal snare

Student and Man of Letters

It was not, however, in the writing of sonnets and canzonets alone that Petrarch's days of seclusion at Vacluse were spent. Here he gave himself to a broad and careful culture of all his faculties which resulted finally in a large literary output, apart altogether from the poems on which his fame chiefly rests. In one of those charming letters from his pen which afford us such interesting glimpses of his inner life, he quotes with strong

personal approval the following sentence from St Augustine 'There are men who go to admire the high places of mountains, the great waves of the sea, the wide currents of rivers, the circuit of the ocean, and the orbits of the stars—and who neglect themselves'

From this folly Petrarch was utterly free His resolution was to make the very best of the faculties with which he was endowed For this purpose, unhampered by the narrowness and superstition of his age, he studied with patient care the great literary masters of antiquity, and transmitted their inestimable wealth to the modern world—He loved learning, and by the diligent use of it became by far the most illustrious of those poet scholars who wandered restlessly from city to city in the Renaissance, thirsting for public approbation, and scattering the seeds of knowledge wherever they went

'Letters to Dead Authors' did not originate in the nineteenth century Petrarch addressed them to Cicero, Seneca, Livy, Virgil Horace, Homer, and others So fully had he studied these great masters that he regarded them as familiar friends, and delighted to hold converse with them His own literary achievement, quite apart from the four thousand lines of Italian verse on which his fame mainly rests, was considerable His Latin epic

on Africa, celebrating the victories of the elder Scipio, was considered, in his own age, worthy of Virgil ; his shorter Latin poems were much esteemed by scholars ; while his prose works on subjects ethical, philosophical, and imaginative fill over a thousand printed folio pages. He based his style on the model of Cicero, and many of his letters on public affairs must be described as orations.

The first printed edition of his works appeared at Venice in 1470, and is therefore one of the very earliest productions of the press.



The Patriotism of Petrarch

Petrarch was not more distinguished as a poet than as a patriot. He loved his country, and by earnest appeals, poetic and epistolary, to its popes, its sovereigns, and its people, he fanned into flame, if he did not create, that passion for liberty which, after a struggle of five centuries, has resulted in the freedom of united Italy. The evils of Italy were chronic ; and during the whole life of Petrarch the internecine conflicts of the Italian republics and princes continued to tear and ravage the land, and to lay her open to foreign invasion. Hence the noble canzone, a part of which we quote, in which Petrarch expresses the sentiments, the patriotism, and the sorrows of many generations :

Oh my own Italy! though words are vain
 The mortal wounds to close
 Unnumbered that thy beauteous bosom stain
 Yet may it soothe my pain
 To sigh forth Tibers woes
 And Arnos wrongs as on Pos saddened shore
 Sorrowing I wander and my numbers pour
 Ruler of heaven! by the all pitying love
 That could Thy Godhead move
 To dwell a lonely sojourner on earth
 Turn Lord on this Thy chosen land Thine eye
 See God of charity
 From what light cause this cruel war has birth,
 And the hard hearts by savage discord steeled
 Thou Father from on high
 Teach by my humble voice that stubborn wrath may yield

Ah! is not this the soil my foot first pressed?
 And here in cradled rest
 Was not I softly hushed? here fondly reared?
 Ah! is not this my country? so endeared
 By every filial tie!
 In whose lap shrouded both my parents lie!
 Oh by this tender thought
 Your torpid bosoms to compassion wrought
 Look on the people's grief
 Who after God, of you expect relief!
 And if ye but relent
 Virtue shall rouse her in embattled might
 Against blind fury bent
 Nor long shall doubtful hang the unequal fight
 For no—the ancient flame
 Is not extinguished yet that raised the Italian name

The passion for Italian liberty infused a new and
 unwonted vigour into the poetry of Petrarch This

is finely exhibited in his magnificent ode addressed to Rienzi, through whom he hoped to realize his splendid dreams. In this inspiring poem he casts away the weak and tremulous lyre tuned to love and vain regrets, and, seizing in its stead a battle-trumpet, he thrills with its animating breath the soul of Italy. He entreats the heroic spirit who stands like an angel above the ill-fated land to end the disastrous reign of rapine, faction, and murderous war, and bring in the reign of peace, justice, and compassion.

The world is weary of the past,
Oh, might it die or rest at last!

This great poem is too long for quotation here, but we append in Macgregor's translation a few stanzas of its pathetic majesty

Pale weeping women, and a friendless crowd
Of tender years infirm and desolate age
Which hates itself and its superfluous days,
With each blest order to religion vowed
Whom works of love through suffering lives engage
To thee for help their hands and voices raise,
While our poor panic-stricken land displays
The thousand wounds which now so mar her frame
That e'en from foes compassion they command,
Or more, if Christendom thy care may claim
Lo! God's own house on fire while not a hand
Moves to subdue the desolating flame,
Heal thou these wounds—this feverish tumult end,
And on the holy work Heaven's blessing shall descend

It is pleasing to note that the noble patriotism of Petrarch received fitting recognition in the August

of 1340 when there came to him from the Senate an invitation to Rome there to be crowned poet laureate. Mindful of his noblest title to fame the chief senator as he placed the diadem on the poet's brow said 'I crown virtue before all.'

~ *Petrarch's Religion*

We are gratified to note that as life wore on and as a fuller experience of its illusions robbed the world of its thralldom a yet deeper love than that for Laura or for native land dominated Petrarch's soul and life. Though no ascetic, seeking happiness in the future life by a self imposed misery in this the piety of the poet was both fervent and sincere. In one of his eloquent prose works he nobly depicts the great periods in the experience of the soul. First Love triumphs over Man; secondly, Chastity triumphs over Love; thirdly Death triumphs over both; fourthly Fame triumphs over Death; fifthly Time triumphs over Fame; and finally Eternity triumphs over Time. Gradually but surely the conviction dawned upon him that this life was but the first step on an infinite scale leading from earth to heaven. Nothing in this world was satisfactory or complete and so he cast anchor within the veil looking for the mercy of God unto eternal life. Hence in one place he thus writes

Mourning the waste of my departed days

I wander—days when vain and worldly things

Drew my soul down to earth though blest with wings

To reach perchance no vulgar height of praise

Thou that hast marked my low and worthless ways

Invisible immortal King of kings!

Succour my soul in these her wanderings

And on her darkness turn Thy gracious rays

So shall this life of war and tempest close

Havened in peace my sojourn has been vain

But my departure shall be strong in bliss

If o'er what little space may yet remain

Thy hand the shelter of its mercy throws—

Thou knowest I have no other hope but this

The love of friends the chivalric love of woman, the love of fame, the love of books, the love of the great men of the past, the love of nature, the love of solitude—these were the dominant sentiments in the soul of Petrarch. To these as the twilight shadows fell upon his path, he added a yet grander sentiment—the love of God

To the last the poet interested himself deeply in the political condition of Italy, and when, in 1367, the papal court was restored to Rome, he addressed to Urban V a long congratulatory epistle. Age came gently as summer twilight to the canon antiquary, basking in the sun at his villa of Arquà. At length, one lovely evening in the July of 1374, the final summons came. Alone in his study the good Petrarch bowed his head upon a Greek copy of Homer, and sank peacefully to his last sleep.

They keep his dust in Arqua where he died,
 The mountain village where his latter days
 Went down the vale of years and t's their pride—
 An honest pride and let it be their praise—
 To offer to the passing strangers gaze
 His mansion and his sepulchre both plain
 And venerably simple such as raise
 A feeling more accordant with his strain
 Than if a pyramid had formed his fane

Thus passed into the great unseen one who commands our homage inasmuch as alike in literature and in learning he was the master spirit of his time. Not only were his matchless sonnets the pride and glory of his age but his work in behalf of the revival of letters and the restoration of art entitles him to perpetual reverence. Barbarism, ignorance and superstition were the giants against which he lifted his lance, and they quivered before its brightness and its point. One of the true embalmers of the memory of genius he rescued from oblivion priceless gems of classical literature which were the models of all future effort. He renewed the spirit of philosophy as expressed by Plato and Aristotle, he softened the harshness and cruelty of Romish belief, he advanced the interests of religion by his love of the spiritual lore of St Augustine. He stood forth as the champion of every great and noble cause, while he was largely instrumental in the emancipation of his native land.

We cannot conclude our sketch of his character

and work more fitly than by quoting the following poetic tribute to his memory from the pen of Monckton Milnes.

Petrarch! when we that name repeat,
Its music seems to fall
Like distant bells, soft-voiced and sweet,
But sorrowful withal,—
That broken heart of love! that life
Of tenderness and tears!
So weak on earth—in earthly strife—
'So strong in holier spheres'
How in his boast of godlike pride,
While em'ulous nations ran
To kiss his feet, he stept aside,
—And wept the woes of man!

TASSO

As round some speck of fretting sand
 The chafing b valve forms its pearl
 Fashioned to grace some dainty hand
 Or gleam beneath some golden curl
 So from thy grief was beauty born
 In one pure radiant pearl of song
 Destined the ages to adorn
 And flout the pride which did thee wrong

T R P D

THE crown which genius wears is not seldom
 a crown of thorns Many of the world's
 greatest poets have learnt in suffering what they
 taught in song The snow clad peak is after all
 a lonely height and though nearest the stars it
 is also nearest the storm cloud Reflections such
 as these are forced upon us as we contemplate
 the strange sad life of Torquato Tasso It was
 the fate of this anointed poet to see nearly all
 his earthly wishes disappointed Much of his early
 life was spent in exile his mother's dowry was
 withheld from him till it was too late to be of
 use, his high placed love vain as the effort of
 a fountain to touch a star failed him, his prince's

favour forsook him in the hour when he most desired it, his restless brain and passionate heart destroyed one shelter after another, to leave him desolate, and the laurel crown, so nobly earned, which should have graced for years his radiant brow, came only in time to deck his tomb. One wish of his youth, and one only, found fulfilment, and it was that which he expressed when he said, 'I hope by labour and intense study, joined with the strong propensity of nature, to leave something to after-times so written that they shall not willingly let it die' The abundant fulfilment of that wish has been realized in the 'Jerusalem Delivered' This great poem is one of the proudest national possessions of Italy. It is at once the delight of prince and peasant, cardinal and gondolier. By its pathetic and passionate refrain it consoles the poor mariner smitten by the summer sun, and its rhythmic lines keep chime with the flail of the husbandman, as amid the chills of winter he beats out the precious grain which is the nation's life.

It was a source of noble pride to Tasso that his work was thus appreciated by the toiling multitude. In one of his pastorals we find the lovely lines

I will imbreathe high fancies in rude hearts
I will refine and render dulcet sweet
Their tongues, because wherever I may be

Whether with rustic or heroic men,
 There am I Love, and inequality,
 As it may please me do I equalize,
 And tis my crowning glory and deep joy
 To make the rural pipe as eloquent
 Even as the subtlest harp

Personal History

Torquato Tasso was born at Sorrento on March 11, 1544. His father came of an honourable family, and his mother was a Neapolitan of the noble house of the Rossi. Bernardo Tasso was himself an author, and wrote, among other things, a poem of considerable merit, entitled 'Amadis,' of which his wife was the heroine. Despite a considerable disparity in their ages, the parents of Torquato were very happy and united, as beside the blue Mediterranean waters, in the orange scented groves of Salerno and Sorrento, they lived for each other and for their children. Ere long, however, the father was called from Sorrento to unite with the Prince of Salerno in repelling the invasion of Piedmont by Francis I. Shortly afterwards the prince fell into disgrace with his feudal superior, Charles V, and was outlawed with his adherents, one of whom was Bernardo Tasso. The mother of the poet and his sister Cornelia were received into a convent, and Torquato was sent to Rome to join his exiled father. The boy was then in his tenth

year, and his heart swelled with intense sorrow at taking what proved to be a last leave of his beloved mother. He recorded his feelings in the following sonnet, written twenty years after

Me from a mother's fostering breast
Stern fortune tore in helpless years
Ah! I remember how her tears
Moistened the lips her kisses pressed,
And how she breathed the fervent prayer
Which scattered by the passing air
Has not availed that face to face
That mother I again should meet
Our arms entwined in fond embrace
So close so binding and so sweet
Thenceforth alas! without a home
Ascanus or Camilla like my feet
Without support or guide were doomed to roam
Seeking an exiled father's sad retreat

At the age of seventeen Torquato was placed by his father at Padua, to study jurisprudence. It is somewhat singular that three of Italy's greatest poets, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso, had been destined with the same indifferent success to the study and practice of the law. The two former threw up the dry pursuit in disgust, while the latter, though he dutifully and diligently applied himself to it yet gave in secret his heart and affections to the muse.

The result of his midnight vigils was a romantic poem in twelve cantos called 'Rinaldo'. This work, published in 1562, was dedicated to

Cardinal Lewis of Este, brother of Alfonso II, Duke of Ferrara and it speedily made the young poet famous throughout Italy. The 'Rinaldo' is a wonderful poem, considering the extreme youth of its author, and an Italian critic fitly discerns in it the scent of a flower, of as yet uncertain colour, beginning to unclothe its petals to the morning light'

Tasso and Leonora

Three years afterwards Duke Alfonso, anxious to be distinguished as a patron of genius summoned Tasso to his palace at Ferrara, where he was speedily nominated the personal attendant of the duke's brother Cardinal Lewis of Este. Here he lived for some time, vigorously prosecuting his great work the 'Jerusalem Delivered' amid all those fascinations which made Ferrara a palace of delights to all who entered it.

Here it was the joy of the poet to read canto after canto of his great poem to the duke's sisters, Lucretia and Leonora whose praise was at once a gladness and an inspiration to his ardent mind. Gradually the charm of Leonora's presence proved too strong for the unfortunate poet, and the peace of his soul became disturbed by a hopeless passion for one far removed from him in rank and fortune. Whether the passion of Tasso was returned is a

question which has been much disputed, but it is certain that the living Leonora was to Tasso what the dead and sainted Beatrice was to Dante—an inspiration and an elevating power which largely influenced the development of his genius. This may be seen from the following sonnet addressed to her, on his resuming his work at her bidding. The translation is by Miss E J Hasell.

If I, a painter not unskilled, should yet
 Renew in verse high, antique memories,
 If Helicon should ope, and my emprise
 With friendly favouring breezes forward set
 Then should the Scythian hear, thy name should get
 Hearers mid Libya's sunny sands, while rise
 'Mid clash of arms, mid Mars high pageantries
 The lauds of modesty with beauty met
 Thy praise as frame right richly wrought shall be,
 That shines some well limned picture fair around,
 And draws men's eyes to it with rays of gold.
 And fit it is such gift to bring to thee,
 Since 'tis thy work this hand no more disdains
 The pen, and seeks the task laid by of old

As with Dante, so with Tasso. After her death the memory of Leonora wrought mightily upon his soul. As the recollection of all that she had been to him rises like a star over the troubled sea of his sad and battling life, he thus invokes her guidance.

That noble flame that once consumed my heart,
 Where I its ashes hide and safe retain,
 On earth is quenched, but, lit in heaven again
 I feel its warmth from thence. Oh, thou who art

A fair star now if thy sweet light once swayed
My dubious course to it for beacon given
While mortal yet, thou thus our earth didst tread
Immortal now and far more beauteous made
Guide me among the rocks where I am driven
To quiet port from out these waters dread

The daring love of the hapless poet for his life's star Leonora brought down upon him her brother Alfonso's haughty and jealous displeasure and was the wellspring of nearly all his subsequent misfortunes. Alfonso proclaimed him mad, and the irritable temperament of the poet giving reasonable colour to the charge he was confined in the convent of St Francis. Making his escape however he fled to his sister Cornelia then living at Sorrento. For a time he was soothed by her tenderness and care but ere long his restless spirit drove him forth from the shelter of her home. The remainder of his sad and tortured life was spent in wandering to and fro. Sometimes he resided at Florence sometimes at Rome sometimes at Naples but always restless and often wretched and despairing to the verge of madness. No doubt his own wayward and extremely sensitive temperament occasioned much of his suffering, but the memory of his unjust imprisonment and the fact that in imperial Rome amid the applause of bishops cardinals, and princes he was destitute and almost starving prove that his miseries were not merely imaginary.

His last letters are filled with details of his distressing poverty, and the following chorus of a tragedy from his pen vividly expresses his sorrow of heart, combined with the conviction that 'glory had passed him like a ship at sea'

As torrents rushing from their Alpine height
As forked lightnings fly
Athwart the summer sky
As wind as vapour as the arrows flight,
Our glories fade in night
The honour of our name is sped
Like a pale flower that droops its languid head
The flattering forms of hope no more prevail,
The palm and laurel fade
While in the gathering shade
Come sad lament and grief and sorrow pale,
Nor Love may aught avail
Nor friendships hand can bring relief
To check our flowing tears or still our lonely grief

Ultimately Cardinal Cinzio invited him from Naples to Rome, at the bidding of the Pope, to be crowned with the poet's laurel in the Capitol—the first poet so honoured since Petrarch. He accepted the invitation and was lodged in the Vatican. But even here he sighed to flee away and be at rest. Seized with a violent illness, he was conveyed, at his own request, to the monastery of St Onofrio. When the physician informed him that his last hour was near, he expressed his gratitude for so sweet an announcement and then, lifting

his eyes heavenward, he thanked God that, after so tempestuous a life, he was now brought to a calm haven. The Pope having granted the dying poet a plenary indulgence, he said, 'This is the chariot on which I hope to go crowned, not with laurel as a poet into the Capitol, but with glory as a saint into heaven.' He expired uttering with trembling lips the sacred words, 'Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.'

Thus died Torquato Tasso, on April 25, 1595, at the age of fifty-one years, leaving to the world a work which will live in its chivalrous beauty, unscathed by the cold utilitarianism of modern days and a name which survives as a mournful token that the gift of song is often but a gift of sorrow.

Interred in the church of the convent of St. Onofrio, no epitaph adorns the plain slab which covers his ashes. Those who laid him there however might fitly have carved upon his tablet the lines in which, in his great poem, he dismisses Godfrey to his last resting place

We need not mourn for thee here laid to rest,
 Earth is thy bed and not thy grave, the skies
 Are for thy soul the cradle and the nest,
 There live for here thy glory never dies
 For like a Christian knight and champion I rest
 Thou didst both live and die now feed thine eyes
 With thy Redeemer's sight where crowned with bliss
 Thy faith zeal merit well deserving is

The Poet's Careful Art

Every verse from the pen of Tasso reveals the patient labour of one who is resolved to express everything as perfectly as his art can fashion it. Some critics assert that the labour is too obvious, and that some of his finest passages smell of the lamp. The poet himself confesses in a letter that he had wearied himself for hours, and made a hundred changes in the two lines to describe Tancred's baptism of the dying Clorinda, without being able to satisfy himself. But it was this extreme care which has stamped his work with immortality. Such passages as the following are not struck off with careless ease even by the supremest masters of verse.

Still Night in star-embroidered vest arrayed
Cast o'er the slumbering world her silent shade
No fleeting cloud disturbed her tranquil reign
The moon, slow rising through the azure plain
O'er lawn and hill her silver lustre threw
And changed to living pearls the orbèd dew

What, again, can surpass that description, from his 'Rinaldo' of a damsel startled by an intruder at her bath in a lucid pool? She issues from the water, dewy and dropping, as *Venus rose out of the sea foam*, and, beholding the intruder, she hastens to undo the knot in which her tresses are tied up,

and shakes them round about her as a veil How
vividly and yet how chastely is the picture set
before us of the limbs of ivory and the locks of
gold! The translation is by Spenser

She up arose,
And her fair locks, which formerly were bound
Up in one knot, she low adown did loose,
Which, flowing long and thick her clothed around,
And the ivory in golden mantle gowned
So that fair spectacle from him was rest,
Yet that which rest it no less fair was found
So hid in locks and waves from lookers theft
Nought but her lovely face she for his looking left

Withal she laughed and then she blushed withal,
That blushing to her laughter gave more grace
And laughter to her blushing

In the same poem we find the splendid lines on
the ruin of Carthage

Great Carthage is laid low Scarcely can eye
Trace where she stood with all her mighty crowd
For cities die kingdoms and nations die
A little sand and grass is all their shroud
Yet mortal man disdains mortality
O human mind inordinate and proud!

How fine is this contrast of the pride with the
mortality of man! Even cities fall and empires
perish, but man is oblivious to his own decay

How eloquent, also, in its suggestiveness is the
following passage from the 'Jerusalem, recording
the attitude in death of a devout Crusader!—

Not prone he lay, but as his longing thought

He ever set above the stars on high,

So now with face upturned the heavens he sought,

Like man whose soul there tendeth constantly

His right hand firmly clenched, like one who fought,

Grasped his good sword to strike the foeman nigh;

The other on his breast right humbly laid,

Showed how for pardon to his God he prayed.

The 'Jerusalem Delivered'

No more engaging subject could have inspired a poet than that to which Tasso devoted sixteen years of his life, and which placed him side by side with Homer and Virgil. His ambition was to tread in the footsteps of Homer, and to produce a Christian 'Iliad' which might rival the story of the wrath of Achilles and the siege of Troy. As we read the poem, we feel instinctively how its author kindles with its theme, as he rises to touch the ideal

thus commences the great epic poem which has handed his name down the centuries

Th illustrious chief who warred for Heaven I sing
 And drove from Jesus tomb th insulting king
 Great were the deeds his arms his wisdom wrought,
 With many a toil the glorious prize he bought
 In vain did hell in hateful league combine
 With rebel man to thwart the great design—
 In vain the harnessed youth from Afric's coasts
 Joined their proud arms with Asia's warlike hosts
 Heaven smiled and bade the wandering bands obey
 The sacred ensigns of his lofty sway

It would be useless now to inquire as to whether the Crusades were conformable to the spirit and genius of Christianity. The Christian thinker of to day would probably condemn them utterly. But the religion of that age was essentially warlike and it was a profound and noble sentiment which led its warriors to bid farewell to home and kindred and brave a thousand dangers in a foreign land. Those are fine lines, translated by Miss Hasell in which Godfrey, the leader of the devoted host, expresses alike their purpose and their confidence in the providence of God.

Has set us on our course and been the guide
Through risk and hindrance of our roving feet,
This has for us smoothed mounts and rivers dried
From winter snatched the frost from summer heat,
Calmed the sea's waves when loud the tempest cried
Restrained or sent the winds to aid our fleet
This Hand has breached for us each lofty wall
Made armed troops before us flee and fall.

'Tis hence our valour hence our hope takes spring—
Not from strength worn by many a toilsome year,
Not from our ships or force that Greece may bring
Nor yet from succouring Franks with shield and spear,
So long as o'er us spreads the shadowing Wing,
We little reck what else is wanting here
Who knows how God can strike and how defend
Will in his peril seek no other friend

But if He should deprive us of His aid
For sin of ours or judgement hid from sight
Who here would grieve in burial to be laid
Where Christ's own limbs received the burial rite?
We die then of who live not envious made
We die—our death pursues avenging might
Nor yet shall Asia in our fate find gladness
Nor need such death bedim our eyes with sadness

The entire course of Tasso's '*Jerusalem Delivered*' is truly epic, while the magic of its music captivates the reader on every page. The poet does not deal with the whole history of the First Crusade, but commences when the war has already begun, in which Godfrey was victorious over the Saracens. His poem is indeed, compressed ;

The Deity Himself is represented as calling the Crusaders to arms. An angel from the presence of the Great King appears to the leader of the sacred host, and declares that victory shall rest upon his standard. On this, stirred with inspired enthusiasm, he assembles his companions in arms, and bids them prepare to march to Jerusalem. We are then presented with a muster of the heroes of the war which reminds us of Homer and his description of the chiefs assembled on the plains of Troy.

The transport with which the Christian host first beheld the sacred city, and the penitential feeling which immediately succeeds, are well described in the following lines, translated by Leigh Hunt

The eager bands unconscious of their speed
 With wingèd feet and wingèd hearts proceed
 But when the sun now high advancing hurled
 His noontide flood of radiance o'er the world
 Lo! on their sight Jerusalem arose!
 The sacred towers each pointing finger shows,
 Jerusalem was heard from ev'ry tongue—
 Jerusalem a thousand voices rung
 Thus some bold mariners a hardy band
 Whose venturous search explores a distant land,
 And braving dubious seas and unknown skies
 The faithless winds and treacherous billows tries,
 When first the wished for shore salutes their eye,
 Bursts from their lips at once the joyful cry,
 Each shows the welcome soil, and pleased at last
 Forgets his weary way and dangers past.

With naked feet they pressed the rugged road,
 Their glorious Chief the meek example showed
 All pomp of dress each vestures gaudy fold
 With silken drapery gay or rich with gold
 Quick they strip off and ev'ry helm divest
 Of painted plumage and of nodding crest
 Alike they quit their hearts proud guise and pour
 Of penitential tears a pious shower

Love and War

From the commencement of the poem the most tender sentiments are combined with the main action. In the Jerusalem Delivered a nobler part has been assigned to love than has been given to it in any other epic poem. Herein it has been truly said Tasso possessed a great advantage over Homer and Virgil. In a Greek or Roman hero love must have been treated as weakness but in a Christian knight it was a flame ennobled by religion giving elevation to the character, and prompting to the noblest deeds of valour. Enthusiastic, respectful devoted love was indeed an essential element of chivalry and Tancred appears more amiable on account of his attachment to Clorinda without any sacrifice of his martial character.

In the fourth canto the Arch fiend is represented as assembling the powers of darkness in solemn conclave to deliberate on the best means of resisting the Christian arms. The lines which describe the gathering of this dread assembly and the

They exercise against the Christian army all the power which they possess over the elements, and which they have acquired over human beings who have devoted themselves to their worship. One of them instigates the Sultan of Damascus to undertake the seduction of the Christian knights by the charms of Armida his niece, who besides being a sorceress, is the most beautiful woman of the East. Confident in her personal charms she ventures alone into the Christian camp and frames a story to excite compassion.

A Lovely Enchantress

In the portrait of Armida Tasso has introduced all that is lovely, tender, and bewitching. His most glowing colours are reserved for Armida's bewildering beauty. He thus introduces her into the poem.

Not Argos, Cyprus, or the Delian coast
 Could e'er a form or mien so lovely boast,
 Now through her snowy veil half hid from sight
 Her golden locks diffuse a doubtful light
 And now unveiled in open view they flowed
 So Phoebus glimmers through a fleecy cloud
 So from the cloud again redeems his ray
 And sheds fresh glory on the face of day
 In wavy ringlets falls her beauteous hair
 That catch new graces from the sportive air
 Declined on earth her modest look denies
 To show the starry lustre of her eyes

O'er her fair face a rosy bloom is spread,
 And stains her ivory skin with lovely red,
 Soft breathing sweets her opening lips disclose—
 The native odours of the budding rose!

Throwing herself at the feet of Godfrey, the artful beauty implores his protection. She represents herself as the rightful heir to the throne of Damascus, of which she has been deprived by her uncle, who has even attempted her life. She is a fugitive an outlaw, an unprotected orphan, but if a small band of warriors be granted to protect her back to Damascus, her partisans there have promised to open one of the gates to her, and having recovered her crown, she will cheerfully transfer it to the Christian chief in gratitude for the preservation of her life. After a moments hesitation Godfrey courteously declines, alleging that he cannot with propriety divert the army from the service of God for an object of mere human interest. But his companions smitten by the beauty and softened by the tears of Armida condemn his cold prudence, and his brother Eustace expostulates with warmth

Forbid it Heaven that ever France should hear
 Or any land where courtesy is dear
 That dangers or fatigues our souls dismayed
 When such a cause as this required our aid.
 For me with shame and grief I cast aside
 My glittering corslet and my helmet's pride

No longer will I wield my trusty sword,
 No more shall arms to me delight afford
 Farewell, my steed! our proud career is o'er
 Knighthood, thy honours I usurp no more

Godfrey relents, and allows ten knights to accompany Armida; but she succeeds in seducing a much larger number to desert the camp and follow her, so that the army is enfeebled at a critical juncture by the absence of so many warriors

Our space does not permit of our following the strife in all its details, neither can we quote the lengthy passage recording the death of Clorinda at the hand of Tancred, which is considered the masterpiece of Tasso. Let it suffice to say that, after a new conflict with the Egyptian army, which came to reinforce the hosts of the infidel, the victory of the Crusaders is fully established. Godfrey gathers the last laurels of the day, and hastens to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to bow before the Lord Christ, who had served his arm for the battle and led him on to victory

Thus Godfrey conquered, and as yet the day
 Gave from the western waves the parting ray,
 Swift to the walls the glorious victor rode,
 The domes where Christ had made His blest abode
 Still in his blood stained vest, with princely train,
 The impatient chieftain sought the sacred fane,
 There hung his arms, there poured his votive prayer,
 Kissed his loved Saviour's tomb, and bowed adoring there

Thus closes a poem of great variety and beauty, remarkable for the magic of its style, crowded with incidents which thrill the soul of the reader with delight and admiration, and filled with warriors, each of whom stands as a model of the hero

Whom every man in arms should wish to be

CAMOENS

Poet and patriot whom malicious hate
Pursued through life with stern relentless ire,
Dark was thy path and pitiful thy fate
Though grandly mitred with celestial fire,
Men cursed thee, but thou hadst revenge how sweet,
In pouring priceless jewels at their feet

R P D

IT has been said that poets are God's prophets of the beautiful, and they have too often received the prophets' wages—the gibbet and the chariot of fire. Fitly might the Giver of all blessing say to the world of men, 'O world, I have sent unto you children of genius, my cupbearers, bringing to you the wine which makes glad all my worlds, and you have despised them, exiled them, starved them.' Of this there is no sadder example than that of Camoens. Not less illustrious as a patriot than as a poet, consecrating his whole life to the task of guarding the honour of his country and of raising a literary monument worthy of its fame, the land for which he lived despised and starved him. The only Portuguese poet who has acquired a European reputation, he rescued his

country from utter oblivion, yet in his old age he was supported by a faithful servant he had brought from Japan, who begged for him in the streets, and on the death of this devoted follower he was carried to a public hospital to die

That is a piteous lament in which he exclaims

Tis done! by human hopes and human aid
 Abandoned and unpitied left to mourn
 I weep o'er all my wrongs—o'er friends fast sworn
 Whose friendship but betrayed
 But whose firm hatred not so soon decayed
 The land that witnessed my return,
 The land I loved above all lands of earth,
 Twice cast me like a weed away,
 And the world left me to the storm a prey

Though his great poem has been translated not only into almost every modern language but also into the Hebrew, for years after his death no stone marked his burial place, until a generous Portuguese erected in 1593 a simple tablet, recording that he 'the prince of poets, lived poor and miserable, and died so' Yet, after all, the poet's work, like that of the prophet, is its own reward He does but sing because he must For him

Stone walls do not a prison make,
 Or iron bars a cage

Place him in a garret, and he will see visions and dream dreams unknown to those who dwell in

palaces Make a cave his dwelling place, and God will find him there, and teach him wondrous things not given to common souls Bury him in a nameless grave, and he will triumph over death ruling us from his sepulchre with a sovereignty more magnificent and more lasting than the Caesars or the Napoleons ever knew All this is true of Camoens, the author of 'The Lusiad' Portugal itself is interesting to us to day chiefly because it was the country of so great a man To quote from Richard Garnett

Tagus yet pealeth with the passion caught
From the wild cry he flung across the sea

The sovereign characteristic of Camoens as a poet was splendid passion He stands proudly eminent among those mighty ones whose works give singly a value to the literature and the language of the land of their birth Little known among British students of poetry and very imperfectly represented by the translations which dismally fail to express the energy, the elegance, and the charm of the original, he is yet one of the immortals. In proof of this Sir Richard F Burton says concerning him 'Homer excels in sublimity, Virgil in purity and tenderness Ariosto in luxuriant fancy, and Tasso in enthusiasm Camoens combines all Goethe said that the highest type of man must

always contain something of the feminine Camoens illustrates this truth He was at once

As soft as a woman and as strong as a man

A few stanzas from his pen will illustrate his tenderness and delicacy of touch better than any vain parade of words. How could cold neglect and lonely sorrow be better portrayed than in the lines

Blindness of death, and doubtfulness of life,
Have made me tremble when I see a joy?

The soothing balm of nature finds sweet expression in the following stanza

When day has smiled a soft farewell
And night dews bathe each shutting bell
And shadows sail along the green
And birds are still and winds serene
I wonder silently

The soothing charm of music is thus described in melodious lines

All sing the joyous traveller
Along his morning way
Through painful paths and forests sings
A merry roundelay

And when at night beneath the star
His lonely way he wends
To banish fear and care he sings
Aloud till darkness ends

More lonely the poor prisoner
Attunes his voice to try
To drown the clash of bars and chains
In songs of liberty

With great daintiness, in another metre, he describes a scene in which winged Cupids are engaged, under the orders of Venus, in forging loves artillery for the transfixing of helpless mortals

The little loves light hovering in the air
Twang their silk bowstrings and their arms prepare
Some on the immortal anvils point the dart
With power resistless to enflame the heart
Their arrow heads they tip with soft desires
And all the warmth of loves consuming fires
Some sprinkle o'er the shafts the tears of woe
Some store the quiver some steel spring the bow,
Each chanting as he works the tuneful strain
Of loves dear joys of loves luxurious pain
Charmed was the lay to conquer and refine
Divine the melody the song divine

Personal History

Luis de Camoens was born at Lisbon in 1524. His family had been distinguished for many years in various departments of the public service. At the age of twelve Luis was sent to the university at Coimbra, where he studied the classics with deep interest. At the age of twenty he returned to Lisbon, and lived the ordinary life of a courtier,

though before this time his literary genius had found some expression in verse. At Lisbon he fell in love with a lady of honour Catharina d'Atayada. Her friends disapproved of the attachment and what was deemed the presumption of the poet was visited by banishment from Lisbon for two years. The place of his retreat was Santarem and here he produced three comedies and a number of sonnets chiefly addressed to his lady love. Many of these are very lovely and prophesy to some extent the power of *The Lusad*. Take for example the following sonnet translated by Southey entitled *Beholding Her*

When I behold you Lady! when my eyes
 Dwell on the deep enjoyment of your sight
 I give my spirit to that one delight
 And earth appears to me a Paradise
 And when I hear you speak, and see you smile
 Full satisfied absorbed my centred mind
 Deems all the world's vain hopes and joy the while
 As empty as the unsubstantial wind
 Lady! I feel your charms yet dare not raise
 To that high theme the unequal song of praise—
 A power for that to language was not given
 Nor marvel I when I those beauties view
 Lady! that He whose power created you
 Could form the stars and yonder glorious heaven

The authors of amatory verses are of two kinds—those who write from the heart and those who write from the imagination. Camoens like Burns

was one of the former. He never forgot the unutterable tenderness of his first love and the anguish of his irreparable loss. How lovely are the lines, translated by Richard Garnett in which he glorifies her memory

Soul of my soul that didst so early wing
 From our poor world thou heldest in disdain
 Bound be I ever to my mortal pain
 So thou hast peace before the Eternal King!
 If to the realms where thou dost soar and sing
 Remembrance of aught earthly may attain
 Forget not the deep love thou didst so fain
 Discover my fond eyes inhabiting

In another beautiful sonnet he thus expresses his insufficiency of praise

So sweet the lyre, so musical the strain
 By which my suit Belovèd! is expressed,
 That hearing them no such indifferent breast
 But welcomes Love and his delicious pain
 And opes to his innumerable train
 Of sweet persuasions lovely mysteries
 Brief angers gentle reconcilements sighs
 And ardour unabashed by proud disdain
 Yet when I strive to sing what beauty dwells
 Upon thy brow so oft in scorn arrayed
 My song upon the unworthy lips expires
 It must be loftier verse than mine that tells
 Of loveliness like thine. My Muse dismayed
 Folds her weak wing and silently retires

Before leaving the subject of the attachment which brought in its train so much of misfortune to the helpless poet, we must needs quote the

lines in which the bitter sweet memory of past joy is expressed with a power which saddens us with its own tender heart break

Ah! might I dream that in some softer hour
 Those sweet bright eyes on which I madly gazed
 O'er all my toils poured one reviving shower
 Of parting tears for memories ne'er erased
 Though bent on mine no more the gentle rays
 'Twould soothe my worn heart with a magic power
 Or might my sad voice in these broken lays
 But reach her in whose sight alone I lived
 And bide her muse on times for ever gone
 Days of lamented passionate errors past
 And cherished ills and hopes that could not last

Longing for active life Camoens on his return to Lisbon joined the expedition of John III against Morocco and lost his right eye in a naval engagement with the Moors in the Straits of Gibraltar. But his bravery as a soldier was no more honoured by his fellow countrymen than his genius as a poet. Grieved and indignant he at last resolved to quit his native land for ever and sailed for India in 1553.

After an absence of sixteen years Camoens returned once more to Lisbon in 1569 bringing home with him only his *Lusiad* from the land whence so many had returned laden with wealth and the remaining years of his life were spent as we have already said in the most abject poverty. Hearing of the battle of Alcacer Quivir in 1578 in which

the king fell, and with him the Portuguese monarchy, he wrote in one of his latest letters, 'I have so loved my country that I rejoice not only to die on her soil, but to die with her' He died obscurely in the hospital at Lisbon in the year 1579; and sixteen years afterwards, when it was proposed to erect a monument to his memory, there was some difficulty in finding his burial-place Thus 'the fathers kill the prophets and the children build their tombs'

'The Lusiad'

'Os Lusíados,' or 'The Lusitanians,' as it is called by the Portuguese, celebrates the chief events in the history of Portugal The aim of its author was to produce a work entirely national The poem is a gallery of epic-pictures, in which all the great achievements of Portuguese heroism are represented. To appreciate truly the work of Camoens, it must be remembered that no proper historical epic had then appeared in a modern tongue The 'Orlando' of Ariosto was the work of a romantic, not an epic, writer, and the 'Jerusalem' of Tasso only appeared the year after the death of Camoens

The poem was written at a happy moment for the inspiration of the poet, for his country had reached the pinnacle of its fame, and the opening up of the new route to India by Vasco da Gama,

the great Portuguese explorer, had revealed new and vast horizons to the mind of Europe. The groundwork of the poem is the voyage of Vasco da Gama, and the epic consists of some eleven hundred stanzas in the metre of Ariosto. The famous explorer is introduced when cruising near the island of Mozambique, and he arrives in safety at Melinda. The king receives him hospitably, and, in answer to his inquiries, Gama proceeds to describe Europe, and his own country in particular, and next relates the history of Portugal from the earliest times down to his own day. His purpose in composing the epic is well expressed in the following lines from Mickle's translation:

Arms and the heroes who from Lisbon's shore
Through seas where sail was never spread before
Beyond where Ceylon lifts her spicy breast
And waves her woods above the wat'ry waste
With prowess more than human forced their way
To the fair kingdoms of the rising day
What wars they waged what seas what dangers past
What glorious empire crowned their toils at last!
Vent'rous I sing on soaring pinions borne
And all my country's wars the song adorn
What kings what heroes of my native land
Thundered on Asia's and on Africa's strand!
Illustrious shades who levelled in the dust
The idol temples and the shrines of lust
And where erewhile foul demons were revered
To holy faith unnumbered altars reared
Illustrious names with deathless laurels crowned,
While time rolls on in every clime renowned

The most striking episode of 'The Lusiad' is the pathetic story of the hapless Inez de Castro. This story is told by Camoens not only with almost rigid historical accuracy but also with a poetic beauty and tenderness never before or since surpassed in epic song. In it we prefer him to either Tasso or Ariosto since with all the enthusiasm of Tasso and all the luxurious fancy of Ariosto he combines the most exquisite tenderness and a tone of touching lamentation which stirs the heart of the reader to its deepest depths. The mournful fate of Inez de Castro who was first murdered because she had been secretly married to Don Pedro the son of the King of Portugal and who, after her death was proclaimed Queen of Portugal on the accession of her lover to the throne has been made the subject of several tragedies and poems. The beauty and pathos of its treatment by Camoens may be imagined from the following passages in the translation by Mickle.

The first describes the appearance of Inez before the King of Portugal and her appeal against the cruel sentence which condemns her to death

Dragged from her bover by murderers ruffian hands,
 Before the frowning king far Inez stands
 Her tears of artless innocence her air
 So mild so lovely and her face so fair
 Moved the stern monarch when with eager zeal
 Her fierce destroyers urged the public zeal

Dread rage again the tyrant's soul possessed
 And his dark brow his cruel thoughts confessed
 O'er her fair face a sudden paleness spread,
 Her throbbing heart with generous anguish bled—
 Anguish to view her lover's hopeless woes—
 And all the mother in her bosom rose
 Her beauteous eyes in trembling tear-drops drowned
 To heaven she lifted, but her hands were bound,
 Then on her infants turned the piteous glance
 The look of bleeding woe the babes advance
 Smiling in innocence of infant age,
 Unawed unconscious of their grandsire's rage,
 To whom as bursting sorrow gave the flow
 The native heart spring eloquence of woe
 The lovely captive thus O monarch hear
 If e'er to thee the name of man was dear
 If prowling tigers or the wolf's wild brood
 Inspired by nature with the lust of blood
 Have yet been moved the weeping babe to spare
 Nor left but tended with a nurse's care
 As Rome's great founders to the world were given,
 Shalt thou who wearst the sacred stamp of Heaven
 The human form divine shalt thou deny
 That aid that pity which even beasts supply
 Oh that thy heart were as thy looks declare
 Of human mould superfluous were my prayer,
 Thou couldst not then a helpless damsel slay
 Whose sole offence in fond affection lay
 In faith to him who first his love confessed
 Who first to love allured her virgin breast

The king is deeply moved by this appeal, and
 wrath and pity struggle for the mastery in his soul,
 but his counsellors clamour for the death of Inez
 as an act essential to the public welfare and the
 legal succession to the throne The stern decree,

therefore, goes forth, and in foul disgrace the armed men bury their weapons in the body of the helpless lady

Thus Inez while her eyes to heaven appeal
Resigns her bosom to the murdering steel
That snowy neck whose matchless form sustained
The loveliest face where all the graces reigned
Whose charms so long the gallant prince inflamed
That her pale corse was Lisbon's queen proclaimed
That snowy neck was stained with spouting gore
Another sword her lovely bosom tore
The flowers that glistened with her tears bedewed
Now shrunk and languished with her blood imbrued
As when a rose erewhile of bloom so gay
Thrown from the careless virgin's breast away
Lies faded on the plain the living red
The snowy white and all its fragrance fled
So from her cheeks the roses died away
And pale in death the beautiful Inez lay
With dreadful smiles and crimsoned with her blood
Round the wan victim the stern murderers stood
Unmindful of the sure though future hour
Sacred to vengeance and her lover's power

The deep damnation of this cruel deed is amply avenged by Don Pedro on his accession to the throne. He further declares that he had been lawfully wedded to Inez, and gives orders that her corpse should be removed from the grave, clothed with royal attire and seated on the throne to receive the homage due to a queen. But, to paraphrase a passage from the greatest of poets the light of her sweet life once extinguished,—that

cunningest pattern of excelling nature once dissolved in death,—where was the Promethean heat that could the flame relume?

Willingly would we linger a little longer with Camoens, and follow, as treated in immortal verse, Vasco da Gama on his adventurous voyage. But the limits of our space are exhausted and we will conclude our notice of the poet, who embodies in himself the genius of the Portuguese with his own pathetic lines as with the sorrows and snows of life's winter upon him he approaches the conclusion of his song with this final appeal to his inspiring muse

And thou my muse O fairest of the train
 Callope inspire my closing strain
 No more the summer of my life remains
 My autumn's lengthening evenings chill my veins
 Down the bleak stream of years by woes on woes
 Winged on I hasten to the tombs repose
 The port whose deep dark bottom shall detain
 My anchor, never to be weighed again
 Never on other sea of life to steer
 The human course. Yet thou O goddess, hear—
 Yet let me live though round my silvered head
 Misfortune's bitterest rage un pitying shed
 Her coldest storms—yet let me live to crown
 The song that tells my nation's proud renown

The appeal was answered and he lived though in poverty and neglect, to conclude a life whose melody will for ever haunt the world

CALDERON

Thanks be to him who graced the actor's role
With parables and lessons from on high
Bringing a message to the human soul
Of trust in God and sacred chivalry—
Who snatched the themes of jealousy and love
From the rude clutch of passion and desire
And charged them with an influence from above,
Which checked and chastened their unhallowed fire
R P D

WE question if there is anything in our modern civilization more to be desired than the purification of the drama. It is useless for moralists and Christians to ignore the theatre. The drama corresponds to essential human instincts, and can never be suppressed. It is, indeed, to day more popular than ever before. What it requires is, not extinction, but guidance into right channels. Fitly directed, the actor's art—in which thought is no longer dead and silent on the printed page, but 'breathes and burns in heroic shapes, and godlike tones, and looks of fire'—should be an education and elevating force. It should relieve some of the burdens of our toiling and suffering humanity, it

should release the pent up feelings of the heart, it should expand and enlarge the vision of the soul, it should reveal men to themselves and by pity and by terror and by the presentation of lofty ideals of character and conduct purify and ennoble them

Because he sought these ends the drama of Calderon is well worthy of our study and indeed quite apart from them such is the charm of his creative genius that no glance at the greater poets of the world could be deemed complete which omitted the last the purest and the greatest of the dramatists of Spain

The Spanish drama like the English sprang out of the mystery plays of the Middle Ages and Calderon was the last heir in a direct line of that inheritance Lope de Vega took possession of the rude drama of the country, and with the instincts of genius strengthened and enlarged it Calderon took it from his hands purified and beautified it by the fires of love and genius, and led it up to perfection

The lot of this great dramatist like that of our own Shakespeare was cast in a splendid age It has been truly said that a great poet without a great country without a great people for him to be proud of and which in return he feels shall be proud of him without this action and reaction

never has been and never can be.' But the dawn of Calderon's genius was shed on an age remarkably rich in materials for the drama. We cannot now realize the power and dignity of Spain in the sixteenth century, or the extent to which the Spaniard was honoured by the admiration and envy of the rest of Europe. Proud of herself and proud of her fidelity to the Romish faith, she could boast a past history rich in conquest, and crowded with incident and passion and marvel.

Personal History and Genius

Pedro Calderon de la Barca, the greatest of the Spanish dramatists, and one of the great national poets of Europe, was born at Madrid on January 17, 1600. He was of noble family, and so precocious was his genius that at fourteen he began to write for the stage. When only nine years old, he was placed under the protection of the Jesuits, and the influence of their training never faded from his life. Sismondi is unduly severe when he characterizes Calderon as 'the poet of the Inquisition' but it may be fairly said that he was the last great poet of Romanism. In his fourteenth year he went to the University of Salamanca and continued there until he was nineteen. During this period he wrote many plays the most famous of

which was that entitled *The Devotion of the Cross*. Having completed his studies at the university, Calderon entered the army and served during several campaigns in Italy and Flanders. In the year 1635 Philip IV who was intensely interested in the drama recalled Calderon to Spain, where he at once took the place in the public regard which the death of Lope de Vega had left vacant. His plays appeared in unbroken succession and were represented with all the pomp incident to a luxurious court. In 1651 Calderon took holy orders but without renouncing his work as a dramatist. From this time however his compositions were generally religious and as he advanced in years he regarded all his dramas which were not of a sacred character as a prostitution of his genius. The amazing fertility of that genius is apparent from the fact that we have from his pen one hundred and eight plays consisting of both comedies and tragedies as well as seventy three *autos* or sacramental dramas. The wealth of invention manifested in his plots is most remarkable many of his plays containing ample matter for three or four French or English comedies. Most of the dramatists who have succeeded him owe something to this vast inventive wealth. He was the first to deal with the theme of *Herod and Mariamne* since treated so magnificently by Mr

Stephen Phillips, while another of his greater plays furnished Goethe with numerous suggestions for his *Faust*

Calderon's personal beauty was remarkable. The lofty forehead, bearing 'the strong impress of divinity,' resembles Shakespeare's more than any other portrait of the age. The face, however, had Shakespeare's seriousness, but not his laughter. It is the face of the poet priest, who loved the precincts of the temple, and who, set apart by the lofty ordination of the pierced hands, consecrated the drama to divinest ends. Writing in the same century as Shakespeare, he may be said, like Shakespeare, to have stolen the thought of his age. He was the representative poet of his land and time, the gifted interpreter of its love, its chivalry, its honour, its religion. The ideal grace and beauty in which the creations of Calderon are steeped, and the warm atmosphere of poetry and romance which he diffuses around them, are beyond all praise. When he wrote, that lordly Castilian language, which Archbishop Trench calls 'the stateliest of the daughters of the Latin tongue' was in its prime, and in his hands it is marvellously rich, ornate, and decorated. Not infrequently the wealth and prodigality of his imagery runs away with him. He squanders it in the bold confidence of exhaustless plenty.

Calderon was essentially Spanish. In him we

find the romantic fervour of his native land, its heroic valour, its deep love of the wonderful together with its quenchless thirst for adventure, all shaped into moulds of deathless beauty by a consummate poetic artist pledged to maintain purity with a sense of honour which felt a stain like a wound. Of this high quality we have a specimen in one of his plays where a Spaniard on being urged to an act of baseness by an order of the king is reminded that he is bound by his allegiance to submit. On which he makes reply 'To the cost of property, yes, but of honour, no no no! My goods and chattels, aye, and my life are the king's but my honour is my own soul's, and that is God Almighty's. The same heroic spirit is displayed by Ferdinand a prince of Portugal, who may well be called

The Martyr Prince

In his historic drama *The Steadfast Prince* Calderon gives us a picture unsurpassed in literature of ideal nobleness. Taken prisoner in an unfortunate expedition against Fez, Ferdinand refuses to ransom himself by surrendering to the Moors the Christian city of Ceuta. To Henry of Portugal who urges this step upon him the noble prince replies

Henry forbear! Such words may well debate
 Not only him who boasts himself a true
 Soldier of Christ and prince of Portugal
 But even the lowest of barbarians, void
 Of Christian faith
 Shall we forsake a city that hath reared
 Within its walls new temples to our God?
 Our faith religion Christian piety
 Our country's honour all forbid the deed
 What! shall the dwelling of the living God
 Bow to the Moorish crescent? Shall its walls
 Re-echo to the insulting courser's hoof
 Lodged in the sacred court* or to the creed
 Of unbelievers? Where our God hath fixed
 His mansion shall we drive His people forth?
 The faithful who inhabit our new town
 May tempted by mischance haply abjure
 Their faith The Moors may train the Christian youth
 To their own barbarous rites and is it meet
 So many perish to redeem one man
 From slavery? And what am I but a man?
 A man now rest of his nobility
 No more a prince or soldier a mere slave!
 And shall a slave at such a golden price
 Redeem his life? Look down upon me king,
 Behold thy slave who asks not to be free
 Such ransom I abjure

For this resolve Ferdinand is condemned to a cruel
 death by slow starvation He persists, however, in
 his heroic purpose, and dies a magnificent example
 of Spanish chivalric piety

This note of chivalry may be described as the
 key note of Calderon's dramatic art, while at the
 same time he stands before the world at large as

a true poet transporting us into realms of richest fancy—realms bright and gorgeous as those suggested by a splendid sunset with its

gleams of sky
And clouds and intermingling mountain tops
In one inseparable glory clad

The Beauties of Calderon

The beauties of Calderon are better understood on the stage than in the library occurring as they do in plays where swift action and deep passion strike them out like sparks from swords in conflict. The following however may be selected as specimens of the poet's power though no translation can give the rainbow play of brilliant harmonies which made the Spanish verse so exquisite in subtle and delicate lyricism.

A Price to His Flatterers

Pay me no idle courtesy
Death comes to-morrow
And makes all things equal.

How all Things Fade

'Tis but to wither that the roses bloom
'Tis to grow old they bear their beauteous flowers—
One calyx is their cradle and their tomb

Moral Training to Youth

And woe to those who train up youth
And spare to press the rights of truth
The mind to strengthen and anneal
While on the stilly gleam the steel

The Mastery of Love

Donna Juana,
At whose name I tremble as some secret
Smitten with the sudden presence of his God

Scrupulous Honour

You talk of honour is not honour then
Slow to suspect—would rather be deceived
Itself than prematurely to accuse?

In Praise of Beauty

I saw a lady in whom the universe
Of beauty seemed to centre—as it might be
The sun's whole light into a single beam
The heavenly dawn into one drop of dew
Or the whole breathing spring into a rose

Apology for a Lover

He that cannot love can be no judge
Of him that does I'll tell thee Celso
He who far off beholds another dancing
Even one who dances best and all the time
Hears not the music that he dances to
Thinks him a madman apprehending not
The law that rules his else eccentric action
So he that's in himself insensible
Of love's sweet influence misjudges him
Who moves according to love's melody,
And knowing not that all these sighs and tears
Ejaculations and impatiences
Are necessary changes of a measure
Which the divine musician plays may call
The lover crazy which he would not do
Did he with his own heart hear the tune
Played by the Great Musician of the world

Curse on a Parricide

May outraged Heaven that has seen thy crime
 Witness my curse and blast thee! Every sword
 That every pious hand against thee draws
 Caught up into the glittering elements,
 Turn thunder bolt (as every weapon shall
 Drawn in God's cause) and smite thee to the centre!
 That sacrilegious hand which thou hast raised
 Against this snow white head—how shall it show
 Before Heaven's judgment bar yea how can Heaven
 E'en now behold this deed nor quench its sun
 Veil its pure infinite blue with awful cloud
 And with a terrified eclipse of things
 Confound the air you breathe the light you see
 The ground you walk on!

Voyage of a Royal Bride

The sea that could not daunt her with his rage
 Soon as her foot was on his yellow shore
 Called up his Tritons and his Nereids
 Who love and make a calm to smooth his face
 And still his heaving breast on whose blue flood
 The golden galley in defiance burned
 Her crew in wedding pearl and silver drest
 Her silken sail and cordage fluttering
 With myriad flags and streamers of all dye
 Swayed like a hanging garden overhead
 Amid whose blossoms stood the royal bride
 A fairer Venus than did ever float
 Over the seas to her dominions
 Armed with the arrows of diviner love

Such are a few extracts from the pen of Calderon taken for the most part from Edward FitzGerald's translation of some of his lighter plays, and published in the series entitled 'The

King's Classics' But it must be remembered that these are only extracts, which suffer greatly by being taken from their native environment A Persian proverb says 'You may bring a nose-gay to the town, but you cannot bring the garden'

Religious Plays

Calderon is, of all dramatic poets, the most Christian His finest claim to immortality is found in his *autos*, which are essentially religious, inso-much as their object was to glorify the Sacramental Act before the multitudes gathered together at the Romish festival of Corpus Christi Some have ventured to despise these plays, the outcome of Calderon's faith as a zealous Spanish Catholic, but Shelley said, in a letter written in the year 1820, 'I am bathing myself in the light and odour of the starry *autos*'

Auto, or act, was a name given at first to almost any kind of dramatic composition, but in the flourishing period of the Spanish drama it was restricted to religious compositions The seventh and last section of these sacred plays is that formed by ethical allegories, such as *There is no Fortune but God* and *The Great Theatre of the World* It is in these representations that Calderon, without ceasing to be a great poet, stands forth also as a

great moral and religious teacher, preaching sermons of which any pulpit orator might be justly proud. We see in them the extraordinary skill of a great master of stage effect who threw his whole heart and soul into his task and sincerely believed himself to be toiling for the glory of God and the welfare of His Church. If another such dramatist should arise in our age we might see realized the noble dream cherished by some among us of a Christian theatre. If the oratorio can flourish in our England, why not the sacred drama with its themes consecrated by the Cross and drawn from eternity and its actors the servants of the Most High? It is in his religious dramas that Calderon shines with the finest lustre. In his noblest efforts it is man's struggles and temptations his fall and his rise again together with the wonders of Redeeming love which are set forth before our eyes.

We are all familiar with Shakespeare's picture of the world as a stage where men and women all are actors and it is this idea which Calderon works out in noble fashion in the play entitled *The Great Theatre of the World*. He who rules all human destinies from the eternal throne is represented as saying—

Since I have devised this play
That my greatness may be shown
I here seated on my throne
Where it is eternal day
Will my company survey

Mortals who your entrance due
By a cradle find, and who
By a tomb your exit make
Pains in all your acting take
Your Great Author watches you

In the course of the play one of the company complains that the part of a beggar is assigned him, whereas he aspired to that of a king. On this he is reminded that it is not the part which matters in the solemn and complex drama of life, but the way in which it is filled. The beggar may be greater than the king if he confers honour on his part by fulfilling it nobly. It is not a man's lot in life which involves honour or shame in the eyes of the Great Director of our destinies, but his faithful performance of the duties laid upon him.

In the play you act he will
As securely win my praise
Who the part of beggar plays
With true diligence and skill,
As who may the king's fulfil

Another drama from the pen of Calderon, entitled *There is no Fortune but God*, teaches substantially the same great lesson. It places the career of a man under the scrutiny of angelic intelligences, and bids him awake to a life of virtue and godliness. In the prologue of the play the angel of distributive justice is heard calling on men to awake to the

solemn responsibilities of existence, and to receive from God their allotted place in the world, where character is to be moulded and heaven lost or won

In those stations I ordain
 You shall all men equal see
 Since no station bad can be
 If man well its part sustain
 Whether full of joy or pain
 Seek no other lot to take
 All men equal entrance make,
 Exit like in birth and death
 Mortals! wake to draw life's breath!
 Unto life awake! awake!

Before, however, the voice of the Angel of Justice is heard, Malice, who serves the evil spirit, has deluded men with the idea that all events in life are to be ascribed to an imaginary deity called Fortune. Malice tells the same lie to all—to the Labourer with his mattock, to the Beauty at her mirror, to the Soldier with his sword to the Student with his book to the Beggar with his staff and to the Monarch on his throne. All believe the falsehood ascribing the gifts of God to Fortune and preparing to follow her. As they are setting out with this end, the Student sees a cross fall from a tree and shows it to the rest. They ask its meaning and Justice replies that it is offered to all though it will be forced on none, and will prove a blessing to those who willingly take it up. It will sweeten

toil ; it will ennoble poverty ; it will sanctify study ; it will save beauty from the breath of the devourer ; and it will add grace and majesty to kingly power. But they will none of them take up the Cross. They all go on pursuing evil and refusing good. Beauty says that there will be time enough for the Cross when she grows old. The King says that his business at present lies with the Soldier and the Student, while his pleasure lies in the lap of Beauty. Sword and Gown make the same answer, and even Toil and Poverty prefer to rail at their bad fortune rather than to seek the blessing of Heaven.

Presently the scene changes, and we see the King paying homage to the Beauty in a fair garden. Labour presents to her his gifts of fruit and flowers. The Soldier lays at her feet the spoils of battle. The Student intoxicates her with the wine of flattery. Suddenly, however, the earth opens at their feet, and the Beauty drops into the abyss, from which rises a hideous skeleton, holding in his bony hands the sceptre of the King and the truncheon of the military Commander. At this the scales fall from the eyes of those whom Malice has deceived. The King sees with terror the folly of his life, and would fain change places with the Labourer and the Beggar, that he may have a lighter account to give at the Judgement.

But they refuse, feeling that their own account will be heavy enough, and that as they have so little to lose death will be less bitter to them than to the monarch hurled from his throne and state. The despised and avoided Cross is now seen to be man's only refuge, and all confess that since no station in life can be evil to a good man or good to an evil man, so the Ruler of life, and He who assigns to men their several stations, is not Fortune, but God.

How delicately Calderon could deal with that passion of love which was the mainspring of Spanish tragedy may be learnt from the following passages from a play entitled *The Painter of his own Dishonour*. Serafina the heroine of the play betrothed for a time to Alvaro has married another on the news that her lover has perished by shipwreck. As events turn out however, Alvaro has not been drowned. Unwilling to reconcile himself to her loss he visits Serafina in disguise, during her husband's absence, and blinded by passion, dishonourably urges his suit on her who is already a wife. After listening for a while in pain and wonder to Alvaro's protestations of worship she thus repels them in words which happily express the beauty and the charm of Calderon alike as dramatist and poet. The translation is by Edward FitzGerald.

Ser Leave me sir, at once
 And without further parley
 That I may be assured *you* are assured
 That lapse of time my duty as a wife,
 My husband's love for me and mine for him
 My station and my name all have so changed me
 That winds and waves might sooner overturn
 Not the oak only,
 But the eternal rock on which it grows
 Than you my heart though sea and sky themselves
 Joined in the tempest of your sighs and tears

Alv But what if I remember other times
 When Serafina was no stubborn oak
 Resisting wind and wave but a fair flower
 That opened to the sun of early love
 And followed him along the golden day—
 No barren heartless rock

But a fair temple in whose sanctuary
 Love was the idol daily and nightly fed
 With sacrifice of one whole human heart?

Ser I do not say it was not so
 But sir to carry back the metaphor
 Your ingenuity has turned against me
 That tender flower transplanted it may be
 To other skies and soil might in good time
 Strike down such roots and strengthen such a stem
 As were not to be shook the temple too
 Though seeming slight to look on being yet
 Of nature's fundamental marble built
 When once that foolish idol was dethroned
 And the true God set up into His place
 Might stand unscathed in sanctity and worship
 For ages and for ages

Nor was Calderon lacking in the elements of true
 sublimity His muse was not the mere tinkling
 of a lute in my lady's chamber, it could rise on

occasion to touch the spheres. The religion he cherished inspired a range of interests which spurned the limitations of the trivial and the finite, and refused to be satisfied with things beneath the moon. Neither were his writings confined to the poetical imagery which was the prevailing taste of his time and country. He was the greatest thinker among the Spanish dramatists. For example, in his drama entitled *The Wonder-working Magician*, we have a portrait of Satan which anticipates Milton's splendid conception of the 'archangel ruined'. The same lofty bearing, the same unconquered pride, the same mournful memory of a lost splendour, confront us here which we find in the great Puritan poet, who was a wondering child when Calderon thus portrayed the Lord of Hell. Asked by the hero of the play, whom he is tempting to abjure the Christian faith, who he is, Satan thus makes reply. The translation is by Shelley.

Since thou desirest, I will then unveil
 Myself to thee, for in myself I am
 A world of happiness and misery,
 This I have lost, and that I must lament
 For ever. In my attributes I stood
 So high and so heroically great
 In lineage so supreme and with a genius
 Which penetrated with a glance the world
 Beneath my feet, that, won by my high merit,
 A King—whom I may call the King of kings,

Because all others tremble in their pride
Before the terrors of His countenance,
In His high palace roofed with brightest gems
Of living light—call them the stars of heaven—
Named me His counsellor But the high I raise
Stung me with pride and envy, and I rose
In mighty competition to ascend
His seat, and place my foot triumphantly
Upon His subject thrones Chastised I know
The depth to which ambition falls, too mad
Was the attempt, and yet more mad were now
Repentance of the irrevocable deed
Therefore I chose this ruin with the glory
Of not to be subdued before the shame
Of reconciling me with Him who reigns
By base subservience

The career of Calderon was remarkable for its duration, since he wrote for a period of nearly sixty years dying full of honours at the ripe age of eighty-seven He lived so long, indeed, that he outlived the greatness of his beloved Spain But he still sang on amid the mournful twilight, exchanging in his later years the lark's bright carol for the melodious plaint of the nightingale, until earth was exchanged for heaven, and he joined the choir of the immortals

RACINE

Not thine the terror or the wonder
Of Aeschylus, whose solemn thunder
Thrills the rapt soul with awe,
Not thine great Shakespeare's range and sweep,
Careering o'er the unmeasured deep,
Heedless of rule or law

Not thine the sun bursts of Corneille,
Bidding the timid spirit quail
Beneath their wanton might
But thine the silver moon's soft ray,
The tender breaking of the day,
The planet's witching light

R P D

Racine is the Raphael of the drama. We find in him all the distinctive qualities of that great master, in whom the antique feeling for beauty was combined with the Christian genius.—LAMENNAIS

THERE are two distinct schools of the drama—the idealistic and the realistic, the classic and the romantic. It is the object of the ideal and classic school to ennoble and elevate reality upon the stage. It curbs the wilder outbursts of passion, it eliminates the vulgar and the common place, it raises life into a serene and lofty region, from which all low and unlovely elements are stud-

ously excluded. On the other hand, the natural and romantic school 'holds the mirror up to nature.' It is satisfied with things as they are. It does not select the beautiful and eliminate the unbeautiful, it does not fasten on the noble and repudiate the base, but presents both as they are manifested in actual human life.

Now, the mind of the true critic will find room for both these schools of dramatic representation, and will appreciate in them whatever is excellent and noteworthy. We utterly resent the dictum of Garrick where he says 'He who understands Shakespeare does not understand the first word of Racine; and he who comprehends the beauties of the author of *Phèdre* is totally ignorant of those of the poet of *Hamlet*' We hold, on the contrary, that the cultured and appreciative mind will have room for both, and generously recognize the distinctive merits of both. The discerning student of the drama, at its best, may indeed have a preference for one school over the other. He may prefer the methods of Shakespeare and Goethe and Victor Hugo, with their daring vigour and the infinite play of life which pervades their work, to that of Racine and Corneille, fettered as they were by the rules of Aristotle, but he will not therefore regard with contempt or indifference the fine productions of these great poets of the age of Louis XIV.

The French classical drama, in its first vigour and freshness, was a noble product, and he has a narrow and prejudiced mind who cannot discern and appreciate its stateliness and beauty. There is indeed a peculiar, and in our judgement an excelling, glory, in the mighty Gothic cathedral lifting tower and spire, pinnacle and gargoyle, into the astonished air, but who can deny greatness also to the Parthenon, with its level shafts and ordered columns set in gleaming marble beneath the bending sky?

Corneille and Racine have been represented as standing in the relation of father and mother to the French classical drama—the former, by his rugged strength and creative mastery, meriting the appellation of the father, and the latter, by his winsome elegance and his melting tenderness standing in the maternal relation, but both are great, and it is our privilege in this sketch to deal with the ideal grace and beauty of Racine.

Victor Hugo calls him the 'divine Racine.' Sainte-Beuve, the greatest of French critics, describes him as 'the most marvellous, the most accomplished and the most venerated of all French poets.' 'Compose an essay on Racine!' exclaimed Voltaire, to whom it was proposed to comment on his plays as he had done on those of Corneille. 'Why, all that I need do would be to write at the bottom

of each page, "Beautiful, perfect, harmonious, sublime" !'

In the work of Racine we find the high-water mark of French poetical utterance. Less vigorous and many-sided than Corneille or Victor Hugo, there is yet about his work a sweetness and repose, a tenderness, a sensitiveness, a play of light and shade, an elevation of thought, a loftiness of utterance, a harmony of proportion, and a melody of cadence, which proclaim him a supreme poetic artist, as well as a writer whose insight into the human heart—the result of an extreme susceptibility of temperament—has never been surpassed

Birth and Early Life

Jean Racine was born in La Ferté-Milon, a small town in the department of Aisne, France, on December 21, 1639, fifteen years after the death of our own Shakespeare. His father held the post of collector of the salt tax, which, being a State office, conferred on him a certain amount of social prestige. In September, 1638, he married Jeanne Sconin, and fifteen months later their son Jean was born. At an early age Jean lost both his parents, and was entrusted to the care of his maternal grandfather. He commenced his education at the Collège de Beauvais, where he obtained a thorough

knowledge of Latin. On the death of his guardian he was sent to one of the schools in connexion with the famous monastery of Port Royal. Here he acquired that religious cast of thought which so strongly influenced his after life. The peace, the silence, and the prayerful vigils of that devout community, where Pascal also received his training permeated the moral, literary, and social air which Racine breathed, and consciously or unconsciously coloured his ideals and aims. It was characteristic of his genius that he found great delight at Port-Royal in the study of Sophocles and Euripides though he did not care for Aeschylus. It is said that he knew by heart the plays of Sophocles and Euripides and it is without question that his dramatic genius was largely influenced by the tenderness and pathos of the one and the polished perfection of the other. The rugged grandeur of Aeschylus did not equally appeal to him.

Racine left Port Royal when nineteen years of age and went to the Collège d'Harcourt in Paris with the idea of taking up as a profession either the law or the church. His heart however, was given to neither, and a successful ode on the occasion of the marriage of Louis XIV led him into the path of literature. A second ode on the Muses won for him the friendship and patronage of Boileau, and this determined his choice of a literary career.

Tragedies

With the production of *La Thibaulte*, his first tragedy, which was accepted by Molière for the Palais-Royal Theatre, Racine drifted, to the great distress of his friends at Port-Royal, into the position of a writer for the stage. His aunt, writing from the monastery, implored him to renounce all future intercourse with people connected with the theatre, and Nicole, one of his former masters, boldly denounced all novelists and playwrights as public malefactors and murderers of souls. Deeply angered, Racine wrote two bitter letters against the Solitaries who had so befriended him in youth, though happily only one of the letters was printed. Later in life, being taunted for this act of ingratitude by a member of the French Academy, Racine nobly replied, 'Yes sir, you are perfectly right. That is the most disgraceful spot in my life, and I would now give my heart's blood if I could efface it.'

The tragedies of Racine may be divided into three classes. To the first class belong those the subjects of which were borrowed from the ancient Greek stage. To the second belong his historical plays. To the third those drawn from Holy Writ after he had retired in penitence from the stage, and identified himself with the religious devotees of Port-Royal.

The first really great tragedy from the pen of Racine and one which took France by storm was his *Andromache*, the scene of which is laid in the palace of Pyrrhus the son of Achilles who retains as captives Andromache the widow of Hector whom Achilles killed at the siege of Troy and her son Astyanax. In this remarkable play were revealed the depth and pathos of his character studies his skill in depicting the passion of love and his exquisite gift of language. There are three distinct love plots in this tragedy—the love of Pyrrhus for Andromache that of Hermione for Pyrrhus and that of Orestes for Hermione.

Racine like Euripides had in his nature a large admixture of womanhood and the Hermione of this tragedy is one of the finest creations of refined and penetrating genius in its study of a wronged and suffering woman. It is womanhood revealed in all its moods of love and fury of devotion and revenge.

Scarcely less marvellous is the picture presented in *Andromache* of the grief and indecision of a noble matron whose heart is divided between love for her son and her wish to keep faithful to the memory of her heroic husband. If she does not marry Pyrrhus he will deliver up her son to the Greeks to be imprisoned and it may be to be slain. If she does marry him Hermione his affianced bride will be wronged and she herself

will be unfaithful to the memory of Hector Her deep anxiety, therefore, is to avoid the marriage with Pyrrhus and yet to save her son In one part of the tragedy she thus appeals to Hermione to exercise her influence on her behalf, not doubting that the fair and stately daughter of Helen of Troy is beloved by Pyrrhus, despite his newly awakened passion for herself

Andromache (to Hermione)

Why fly you madame? Is it not a sight
To please you, Hector's widow at your knees,
Weeping? But not with tears of jealousy
I come nor do I envy you the heart
Surrendered to your charms A cruel hand
Robbed me of him whom only I admired
Love's flame was lit by Hector long ago,
With him it was extinguished in the tomb
But he has left a son Some day you'll know
How closely to one's heart a son can cling,
But you will never know—I wish it not—
How keen the pang when danger threatens him
And they would take him from you—all that's left
To soothe a blighted heart

Hermione, however, is powerless to influence Pyrrhus, who has transferred his passion from her to Andromache Nothing remains, therefore, for Andromache but to cast herself at the feet of Pyrrhus, concerning whom Hermione says, not without a touch of jealousy

For who can bend him better than yourself
His soul has long been subject to your eyes?

Andromache (to *Pyrrhus*)

See to what state you have reduced me sire!
 I've seen my father slain our walls enwrap'd
 In flames and all our family cut off
 My husband's bloody corpse dragged through the dust
 His only son reserved for chains with me
 For his sake I endure to live a slave
 Yea more this thought has sometimes brought relief
 That fate has fixed my place of exile here
 The son of many kings beneath your sway
 Is happier as a slave than he could be
 Elsewhere and I had hoped his prison walls
 Might be a place of refuge.

Blind with passion *Pyrrhus* now replies to
Andromache

Madame stay
 Your tears may yet win back this cherished son
 Yea I regret that moving you to weep
 I armed you with a weapon gainst myself
 I thought I could have brought more hatred here
 You might at least consent to look at me
 See are mine eyes those of an angry judge
 Whose pleasure 'tis to cause you misery?
 Why force me to be faithless to yourself?
 Now for your son's sake let us cease to hate
 'Tis I who urge you Save the child from death
 Must sighs of mine beg you to spare his life?
 And must I clasp your knees to plead for him?
 Once more—but once—save him and save yourself
 I know what solemn vows for you I break
 What hatred I bring down upon myself
 Hermione shall go and on her brow
 For crown I set a burning brand of shame
 And in the fane decked for her marriage rites
 Her royal diadem yourself shall wear

- This offer lady is no longer one
 You can afford to scorn Perish or reign!
 A year's contempt has made me desperate
 Nor can I any longer live in doubt
 Harassed by fears and mingling threats with groans
 To lose you is to die—'tis death to wait.
 I leave you to consider and will come
 To bring you to the temple where this child
 My fury shall destroy before your eyes
 Or where in love I crown you as my queen

Unable to save her son by any other means Andromache consents to marry Pyrrhus At the close of the ceremony he places his diadem on her brow and hails her Queen of Epirus On this the frenzied Greeks close in on him and slay him for thus exalting a Trojan woman On her way to the temple Hermione whose love for him is an 'ever fixed mark meets the bier of Pyrrhus and stooping over his body turns her head toward heaven, and stabs herself The play ends with a wild outburst of passion and despair from Orestes, who loves Hermione and would have died for her

The *Andromache* of Racine was followed by *Les Plaideurs*, or *The Litigants* his only comedy, and this was followed by *Britannicus*, with the three other historical tragedies *Bérénice*, *Bayacét*, and *Mithridate* The last of these appeared in 1673 These plays, on which we cannot linger at any length abound with beautiful passages which alone might have conferred on their author a lasting fame The love

of Antiochus for Bérénice is depicted with the hand of a master. How full for example, of poetic melancholy are the lines in which he describes his loneliness after the departure of the woman he adored

*What weariness came o'er me in the climes
You quitted! Ah how long I lingered there
Haunting the charming scenes where I adored you!
I asked you of your sad forsaken realms
I sought in tears each trace your steps had left.
At length by melancholy overpowered
Towards Italy despair directed mine*

The description by Bérénice of the Roman pomp which graced the splendour of Titus her royal lover, is also impressive and magnificent

*Didst thou Phenissa, see that splend'ring sight?
Are not thine eyes still with its grandeur filled?
Those torches that bonfire that night of flame
Those eagles, ensigns, people and that army
That crowd of kings those consuls and that senate—
All borrowing from my lover the r whole splendour
That pomp that gold exalted by his glory
Those laurels still the witness of his triumph*

*That port majestic and that sweetest presence
Heavens! with what mixed respect and with what ple:
All hearts in secret store their faith to him!*

In the fourth act of the same tragedy the scene is profoundly touching and impassioned where Titus informs Bérénice that they must part he returning to Rome while she is abandoned and forsaken

Well cruel, reign and sate yourself with glory!
 Grant that I had been waiting to believe you
 Till those same lips that poured forth countless oaths
 Vowing a love which should for ever bind us—
 Those lips confessed before me to be faithless
 Themselves should order my eternal absence
 I wished to hear myself my fate from you
 But now I will not hear Farewell for ever!

For ever! ah great prince think but yourself
 How frightful is that word to those that love!
 What torments must a month or year on both
 Inflict when severed by the pathless sea!
 Oh let the sun still rise and still go down
 And Titus never cease to see his love
 And Bérénice never lose her Titus!

Phèdre

In 1673 Racine was elected a member of the famous Académie Française while in 1674 he produced his *Iphigénie* and in 1675 his *Phèdre*. These two tragedies placed him on the highest pinnacle of his greatness. Voltaire pronounced the former to be the most perfect of all tragedies. Though it abounds with passages of exquisite delicacy and pathos, it must still however be admitted that what is best in it Racine owed to Euripides. The *Phèdre* on the other hand is a creation of supreme and deathless genius. It glows with the true Promethean flame borne from the heavenly altar. It is the *Hamlet* of the French stage.

Before its delineation by Racine, it had been dealt with by Euripides and by Seneca, but it was reserved for the French dramatist to drown horror in pity and to transform a shameful incident into a lesson of supremest virtue. The torture suffered by a sensitive and noble soul steeped in involuntary guilt furnishes a study of the loftiest moral significance.

That we may rightly appreciate this fateful tragedy, it is needful to recall the great philosophical principle that there is no sin back of the will—or, in other words, that guilt can only be charged where the will has chosen and approved the act. The dread offence which darkens the soul of Phèdre is a passionate and unconquerable love for her stepson Hippolytus. For this passion, however, she is not really responsible, since, in harmony with the Greek idea of fate, declaring that this or that horror has been occasioned by supernatural agency, the horrible offence of Phèdre has been thrust on her in the spirit of revenge by the goddess Venus. It is the way in which she loathes this offence and battles with it that constitutes the profound moral lesson of the tragedy.

When first brought upon the stage, Phèdre is mourning her wretched condition. For three nights she has not slept, and for three days taken no food, because of the agony of her inner conflict with the unholy passion from which she cannot break

away Overwhelmed by her desolate condition,
Oenone, her nurse, thus addresses her

Oenone By what remorse are you thus rent asunder?
What crime has pressed on you such agony?
Surely your hands have not been stained with blood?

Phèdre Not thanks to Heaven my hands are free from
blood,

Would that my heart were equally unstained!

Oenone What horror then has settled on your heart?

Phèdre Spare me the rest I cannot tell you more

At last, through the entreaties of her nurse and
confidante, the struggling heroine is led to divulge
her secret. We give the few hurried words of the
recital by the poet, which are as so many dagger-
thrusts

Phèdre Of love I feel the fury

Oenone Love of whom?

Phèdre Thou soon shalt hear the very height of horrors
I love, at the curst word I tremble shudder!
I love!

Oenone But whom?

Phèdre Thou knowest the royal son
Of the Amazon—that prince I long oppressed?

Oenone Hippolytus? Great gods!

Phèdre 'Tis thou thyself hast named him!

She then tells how she has striven against the
passion which is her torment She has caused
Hippolytus to be banished from his home, that he
might no more confront her She has sought to
propitiate Venus by erecting temples in her honour
But the hand of fate is against her That which

possesses her is a frenzy, a madness, and she longs to drown it in the gulf of death. She desires to die, and thus cast off the shame which is her torture, and recover her spiritual purity.

How pathetic is her appeal to Venus

O thou who see'st the shame in which I am
Venus implacable! Is the measure full
Of my confusion? All thy darts have struck,
Thy triumph is complete

With what fervid eloquence she expresses abhorrence of her crime

I know my perfidies, I'm not of those
Who hardened taste of peace while steeped in crime
And fashion for themselves ne'er blushing fronts
I know my furies recollect them all,
Already seem these walls these hollow vaults
About to speak with tongues and to accuse me,
Waiting my husband's coming to undeceive him
Come death! from horrors such as these release me

How admirably her anguish is expressed when she hears that Hippolytus loves another. 'Alas!' she sighs, 'they are innocent, and may love without remorse'

Each day the sky for them was clear serene,
And I the while sad outcast of all nature,
Concealed myself by day, and shunned the light.
Death the sole deity I dared implore,
I waited for the hour I might expire
Feeding on bitter gall and drowned in tears

How magnificent, again, is the passage in which

her awestruck fancy projects itself into the world of spirits—the celestial world where her ancestors are gathered whose glory she has steeped in shame, the realm of Hades where her father Minos sits as judge

Wretched and yet I live! and yet I bear
 To see the sacred sun from which I come
 My ancestor the father of the gods
 The heavens the world are filled with my forefathers
 Where can I hide me? In the night of Hades?
 But there my sire holds fast the fatal urn
 Placed in his hands secure by destiny
 There Minos judges all the ghosts of men
 Ah! how his soul will shudder to behold
 His daughter to his eyes presented forced
 So many crimes to tell by her committed—
 Crimes haply yet unknown in hell itself!
 What wilt thou say my father? At this sight
 I think I see the awful urn fall down
 From thy astonished hands I think I see
 Thy efforts to invent some novel torment
 And on thine offspring act the executioner
 Forgive! A cruel god has dealt destruction
 Upon thy family his vengeance plain is shown
 In thy child's madness while alas! my head
 Has never reaped the fruit of the foul crime
 Of which the shame still haunts me But by ills
 Unnumbered persecuted while I breathe
 I lead a life of endless boundless torment

While Phèdre is labouring under the stress of her mental distraction and piteous agony, her nurse, Oenone becomes an evil counsellor, pushing her, by incitements to the practice of deceit, still more

deeply into the mire. Yet such is the art with which the poet treats his subject, that all her frenzied wrongdoing cannot suffice to plant the brand of real guilt upon this woman's brow. When we are inclined to condemn her as an adulteress or denounce her as a deceiver we are silenced by the lines

Heaven in my bosom lit a fatal fire
Hateful Oenone has done all the rest

We are not surprised that Voltaire pronounced the *Phèdre* of Racine to be the most wonderful character ever created for the stage. In this character the poet has placed upon the brow of a would be adulteress the aureole of a saint and when goaded into madness by remorse and shame she jumps the life to come such is the spell he has woven round her character that we feel persuaded the chrism of death has purged her spirit from the last touch of baseness and she has entered a pure woman into the sanctities behind the veil. In harmony with this conviction we find her exclaiming with her latest breath

Death to my vision shows the light of day
And gives me back the brightness I had dimmed.

In modern literature Thomas Hardy has attempted something akin to this in his character of Tess whom he pronounces despite her loss of innocence

'a pure woman' We go with him three parts of the way, but when Tess returns to the brute who so foully wronged her, the marble statue, wrought with so much cunning, tumbles into the mire

Sacred Dramas

In our study of the life of Racine we learn how the evil environment of the stage dragged him, when at the summit of his fame, into sensual mire

Shakespeare, in one of his confessional sonnets, mourns over the contamination of his noble and gentle spirit by the poisoned atmosphere of the theatre 'Oh, for my sake, he writes—

Oh for my sake do you with fortune chide
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds
That did not better for my life provide
Than public means which public manners breeds!
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in like the dyer's hand

It was thus, alas! with Racine Handsome, impassioned, and universally admired, he was lured by the voice of the siren into indulgence in pleasures whose remembrance was a sigh But, through the helpful influence of the years of his devout seclusion in early life at Port Royal,

consideration, like an angel came,
And whipped the offending Adam out of him

He became sincerely penitent, his spiritual hunger asserted itself, and obtained the mastery over sensual passion. He declared it to be his conviction, not only that playwrights were so many 'public poisoners of the human mind,' but that he himself was one of the most dangerous among the number. He determined to write no more tragedies, and to atone for those he had already written by the severest penance. He even seriously meditated becoming a Trappist monk.

A wise spiritual director, however, came between the poet and his 'battling soul,' and prevailed upon him to take to wife a young woman of good principles and consistent piety. He was married on June 1, 1677. Immediately after his marriage he sought a reconciliation with the recluses of Port-Royal, and was received with open arms by Nicole, his old tutor, who had previously denounced him.

Inspired by a new and hallowed enthusiasm Racine emerged at length from his literary retirement, and devoted himself to those sacred dramas which have done so much to enhance and perpetuate his fame. In 1689 he wrote, under the auspices of Madame de Maintenon, his drama of *Esther*, for the nuns of Saint-Cyr, and in 1691 he produced his *Athalie*.

Previously tragedy in his hands was a history

of the passions and a tablet of the heart. The dominating theme of his productions was the inexhaustible passion of love, embodied for the delight of the spectator in forms of grace and dignity such as had never before moved across the stage in France. Now, however, the sentiment of love is not made the central motive, but patriotism, duty, the evil of transgression, and the grandeur of faith in God. Drawn faithfully from incidents provided by Holy Scripture, the simplicity and the probability of the plot of these dramas, the subtle delineation of character they contained, the fine sacred lyrics which wedded devotion with the charm of music, the noble choruses founded on the Greek model which blended one act with another in unbroken continuity, all contributed to a result of beauty and harmony which forced even from the lips of Voltaire the expressions, 'Superb ! marvellous !'

' Esther

The principal charm of *Esther* is found in the exquisite delineation of the character of the heroine, and in the enchanting style in which the whole is written. In this drama Racine might have said with Goethe in his *Iphigenia*, 'My heroine shall say nothing which a saint might not utter.' The

character of the lovely daughter of Israel is ably depicted in a few words by Ahasuerus

In you alone I find a certain grace
A modesty enchanting at all times
Nor ever wearying How soft, how powerful,
Are lovely virtues features! All in Esther
Breathes only innocence and peace serene.

The words of the young queen in the opening of the drama attest at once her winsome patriotism, her delight in ministry for the unfortunate, and her modest self effacement

My fond attachment to our Jewish nation
Has filled this palace with fair Zion's daughters
Young tender flowers blown by the storms of fate
Like me transplanted to a foreign soil
Placed in a refuge far from eyes profane
To train them I devote my hours my cares
In that retreat shunning the pride of crowns
Tired of vain honours studying myself,
I humble me before the Eternal King
And taste the joy of sinking to oblivion.

A king protects me a victorious king
Has to my hands this sacred trust committed
'Tis he collects these timid doves once scattered
O'er many a region without help or guide
For them he raised this palace at his gate
And bade them here abundance find and peace.

The poetic charm of Racine finds beautiful expression in this description of the exiled daughters of Israel as tender flowers blown and transplanted by the storms of fate on to a foreign soil as timid

doves scattered o'er many a region in inhospitable air, until, alighting at the palace gate of Ahasuerus, they find sustenance and peace

The piety and humility of Esther are well expressed in the passage

At length the sovereign's orders being received
Before the mighty potentate I stood
God holds the hearts of kings in His dread hand
And makes all work for good to simple natures
While in their snares the proud themselves are caught
Of my poor charms the king became enamoured,
Long he observed me in stern thoughtful silence
While Heaven that turned the balance in my favour
Was doubtless moving towards me his rich heart
Then with his eyes of sweetness full and softness
'Be queen' he said and with his royal hand
He placed the diadem upon my brow

Beautiful also is the rebuke of pagan idolatry and the brief delineation of the character of Jehovah contained in the lines

That God the sovereign Lord of earth and heaven
Is not what error paints Him in your eyes
The Eternal is His name the world His work
He hears the sighs of humble ones oppressed
Judges all mortals by His equal laws
And from His throne calls to account our kings

'Athalie

The greatest of Racine's sacred dramas is *Athalie*. It is the fruit of the maturity of the

poet's genius, the result of twelve years of silent meditation.

Based on the events recorded in the Second Book of Chronicles, where Athalie, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, seeks to exterminate the posterity of David, and to supersede the worship of Jehovah by the service of Baal, it throbs with that peculiar sublimity which invests Hebrew poetry with pre-eminence over all other messages and voices which have appealed to man.

Utterly divorced from the passions, which are the ordinary springs of dramatic art, its central characters are an idolatrous queen, a priest, and a boy. Yet Racine has clothed these characters with attributes so thrilling that this moving tragedy stands forth as one of the very finest creations of genius. Radiant in the light which an illustrious ancestry of priests, prophets, and kings sheds down upon his head, and touched by that still brighter glory which sprang from the Messianic hope—the great hope of Israel and the world—the boy Joash rebukes Athalie by his innocence, piety, and trust, and we learn how awful goodness is, even though it be shrined only in the heart of a child.

The first entrance on the stage of Athalie, when she profanes the Jewish temple by her presence in its courts as an idolater, is strangely impressive. Adorned with barbaric pearl and gold, and with

Mattan, a priest of Baal, by her side, she strides with flashing and defiant eyes into the sacred precincts, to be confronted with Joash, the future king of Israel, who has been hidden there from his birth to escape her murderous hate. The first glance at the youth in his linen ephod transfixes her with terror, the result of a dream, which she relates to Abner

'Twas in the terror of a night profound
My mother, Jezebel, appeared to me
Attired with pomp as at her death she seemed
Her pride had no way yielded to misfortune—
Nay, she still wore those splendid borrowed tints
Wherewith her countenance had once repaired
The irreparable ravages of time
'Tremble,' she said 'my daughter, worthy me,
The cruel God of Israel conquers thee.
I pity thee fallen into hands so stern!'
She said, she ceased her dreadful words to utter, >
Her shade toward my couch appeared to bend,
I stretched my arms that I might then embrace her,
But found a mass, horrid beyond compare,
Of mangled flesh and bones dragged through the mire,
Of fragments soaked in blood, of hideous limbs
Which ravening dogs together fought to gnaw

After her mother's hideous spectre has vanished a child appears, whose sweetness comforts her, but while she is admiring his beauty a strange chill fastens on her heart, and the child plunges a dagger into her breast. And lo, before her—'oh, wonder-

ment! oh, terror!—in Joash stands the child of her dream

Restraining her fears, she thus addresses the youth whose beauty still attracts and fascinates her

Athalie Who is your father?

Joash I am an orphan, madam

Thrown since my birth on God's paternal care

Athalie At least you know where you have found a home?

Joash The precincts of the temple are my home

Athalie Who then sustained you in your infancy?

Joash Our God will never let His children want,
He feeds the birds that wander through the air,
And each day at His altar I am fed

Athalie What are your daily tasks?

Joash I worship God

I study in His law I read the book divine

Athalie And what does His law teach you?

Joash That God des res our love

That He will judge those who blaspheme His name
That He defends the orphan and the wronged
And that He smites the cruel and the proud

Athalie What are the people doing in this place?

Joash They are for ever praising Israel's God

Athalie Have you no other joy? I pity you
Come to my palace and behold my splendour

Joash Not so for then I should forget our gracious God

Athalie I will not ask you to forget Him child!

Joash But then you do not pray to Him I worship

Athalie I have a god I worship, you have yours
Both gods are powerful and wonderful.

Joash Mine only is God madam yours is nothing

After some further words *Athalie* retires. Then one of those choruses is introduced by which, as in the Greek drama, the continuity of the action

of the play is maintained The chorus is composed of young virgins of the tribe of Levi who enter and sing

Chorus

What star of lustre strikes our eyes?
How bright doth this young wonder rise!
And with what noble scorn
He dares seduction's charms despise,
To high achievements born!

One Voice

Whilst at the impious queen's decree
Thousands to Baal bend the knee
An infant's voice has dared proclaim
The one supreme eternal Name

Through the succeeding acts of the tragedy the interest deepens until the worshippers of Baal are defeated, and Athalie is slain with the confession on her lips

Oh God of Israel the battles Thine!

The interest of the tragedy of *Athalie* is largely heightened by the force of contrast The glare of the palace and the twilight of the temple the noise of revelry and the hush of prayer, Athalie in her fierce, defiant idolatry and the priest and the boy bowing in meek worship before the sacred Ark — all is thrilling and effective in the highest degree

In one of the choruses of the play this contrast is finely accentuated

Chorus

Where Pleasure leads laughter and song be ours
 Thus speak those Impious throngs
 Care for the future to dull fools belongs,
 To passion give the reins, cull the sweet flows,
 Too quickly at the best, years take their flight,
 Who knows if he shall see to-morrow's light?
 Let us to-day enjoy life's fragrant bowers!

One Voice

The heart whose love is Thine
 My God who can disturb its peace?
 Thy will supreme, its guiding star doth shine
 With beams that never cease
 What happiness in earth or heaven can be
 Like peace that keeps in sweet tranquillity
 The heart that loveth Thee?

The close of Racine's life was sad and stormful. Louis XIV, after showering many favours upon him, finally cast him off because he had dared to champion too strongly the cause of the common people. Cursed by that extreme sensitiveness which is the bane of poets, he bitterly resented the indifference of his contemporaries to his finest work. Smitten by a painful internal disease, his sufferings were acute and terrible, until, on April 21, 1699 he passed away. All life long he had laboured under a violent fear of death but this was completely banished in his last hours by a renewed faith in God and immortality.

Deservedly regarded by French critics as the

greatest of all her masters of tragic pathos, Racine took the conventional French tragedy from the stronger hands of Corneille, and added to it all the grace and harmony of which it was capable. His touch is as fine and delicate as the tones of a violin in the hands of a master. In the attribute of high creative power he was inferior to Corneille, but he excelled him in delicacy of touch, in insight into the nature of woman, in that majestic sadness which constitutes the chief charm of tragedy, and in the fidelity with which, like the greater Greeks, he made moral beauty a special feature of his work, and thus elevated the stage into a school for nobleness and faith in God.

SCHILLER

Free as the Alpine torrent's leap
 Pure as lifted snows
 Grand as the Eger's rocky steep
 Calm as its still repose
 Fronting the storm with quiet eyes,
 Braving the tempest's might
 Meanness before thy presence flies
 And heroes spring to light

R P D

He was a seer—a prophet A century has passed since his birth and we revere him as one of the first among the spiritual heroes of humanity —FRIEDERICH VISCHER

THOUGH in breadth of vision and depth of intellectual insight Schiller will not compare with Goethe among German poets he still demands a place with the immortals His genius may be described as stimulative rather than as creative but even if he had produced less which has won a permanent place in literature his lofty and heroic personality would win for him the reverence of all noble men The canon of Milton was that he who would write heroic poems shall make his own life an heroic poem and in accordance with this

precept the finest fruits of Schiller's genius appeared as the natural issue of his life.

In all authentic portraits of him he is represented as looking upwards, and the poise of his head is the symbol of the attitude of his mind. He ignored the squalid and the mean in life, and communed only with the lofty and the noble. The true secret of his power, both as a man and a poet, is aptly expressed by Goethe where he says :

Behind him, like an empty show, remained
The commonplace that holds us all enchained

And not only did the commonplace remain behind him, but also the corrupt and the unclean. His conception of the poet's vocation stamped him from the first as a purifier. He regarded poetic genius as the inspired gift of God, and the man of genius as a divine instrument whose office it was to remind man of his true destiny as a son of God. Hence he writes in one place : ' The artist, it is true, is the son of his age, but pity for him if he is its pupil, or even its favourite ! Let some beneficent divinity snatch him when a suckling from the breast of his mother, and nurse him with the milk of a better time, that he may ripen to his full stature beneath a distant Grecian sky. And having grown to manhood, let him return, a foreign shape, into his century ; not, however, to delight

it by his presence, but terrible, like the son of Agamemnon, to purify it'

Schiller has been compared to Byron. From a literary standpoint the comparison may hold good, but there the resemblance ends. His delight in the sanctities of home, together with his radiant cheerfulness of disposition, separated him far from the wild unrest and despairing pessimism of the author of *Manfred* and 'Don Juan'. England will do well to forget Byron, but Germany cannot forget Schiller without the loss of much which makes for nobleness.

No discerning reader can study the poetry of Schiller without the conviction that beauty and truth walked with him and lent him their continual inspiration. A few passages, selected almost at random, will attest this.

These suns then are eclipsed for us Henceforward
Must we roll on, our own fire our own light

Time consecrates,
And what is grey with age becomes religion

Stand you up
Shielded and helmed and weaponed with the truth
And drive before you into uttermost shame
All slanderous liars.

This is the curse of every evil deed
That, propagating still it brings forth evil

Ever on the wing
Is mortal joy with silence we best guard
The fickle good

The Spirit's Ladder

The spirit's ladder,
That from this gross and visible world of dust
Even to the starry world with thousand rounds,
Builds itself up, on which the unseen powers
Move up and down on heavenly ministries

Revolution and Evolution

Straight forward goes
The lightning's path, and straight the fearful path
Of the cannon ball Direct it flies and rapid,
Shattering to reach and shattering what it reaches
That on which blessing comes and goes doth follow
The rivers course the valleys playful windings,
Curves round the corn field and the hill of vines,
Honouring the holy bounds of property

Crime and Penalty

Who sows the serpent's teeth let him not hope
To reap a joyous harvest Every crime
Has in the moment of its perpetration
Its own avenging angel—dark mingling
And ominous sinking at the inmost heart.

The Old Divinities

The intelligible forms of ancient poets
The fair humanities of old religion,
The power the beauty and the majesty,
That had their haunts in dale or piney mountain,
Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring
Or chasms or watry depths, all these have vanished,
They live no longer in the faith of reason!
But still the heart doth need a language, still
Doth the old instinct bring back the old names
And to yon starry world they now are gone,

Spirits or gods that used to share this earth
 With man as with their friend, and to the lover
 Yonder they move from yonder visible sky
 Shoot influence down, and even at this day
 'Tis Jupiter who brings whatever is great
 And Venus who brings everything that's fair!

Birth and Early Life

In Southern Germany, where the Neckar spreads its silver through vine clad hills the poet Schiller first drew breath. He was born at Marbach in Wurtemberg, on November 10, 1759. Mothers count for much in the lives of men and the mother of Schiller counted much in his. Though small in stature she was great in soul being a deep lover of nature and of music, and an ardent student of the poets. Furthermore, her piety was very simple and sincere. There is a lovely incident recorded how once, on an Easter Monday, walking with her little girl and boy over the hills, she told them with so much fervour of the two disciples who met Christ when they were walking to Emmaus that, when they reached the hill top mother and children knelt together in fervent prayer.

The father of the poet was engaged as an army doctor in the service of the Duke of Wurtemberg. The literary instinct was strong in him and he also was a devout Christian. The son tells us how he delighted to kneel when his father led the

worship of the soldiers, and to join with them in prayer. In 1765 the father was raised to the rank of captain, and shortly afterwards transferred to Stein's regiment at Ludwigsburg, where the duke held his court. Here the boy Friedrich was brought into contact, for the first time, with operas and ballets, plays and masquerades, and took great delight in them.

When thirteen years old Schiller was drafted from the grammar school at Ludwigsburg into a military academy, and set, by order of the duke, to the study of medicine. According to his biographers, he was at this time an awkward youth of strange habits and an uncertain future. 'But in that young soul,' as one has said, 'dwelt genius, that alchemy which converts all metals into gold, which from suffering educes strength, and from error clearer wisdom.' As time sped on he developed a growing passion for literature. Shakespeare, Rousseau, Plutarch, and Goethe were studied with fervent enthusiasm, and by them all the forces of his life were changed. Ere long he began to imitate that which he so keenly admired. He composed odes and sent them to the local papers. He tried his hand on a drama, which, however, he had the wisdom to destroy, and before he was nineteen he had completed some scenes of his first great play, *The Robbers*.

Spirits or gods that used to share this earth
 With man as with their friend, and to the lover
 Yonder they move from yonder visible sky
 Shoot influence down, and even at this day
 'Tis Jupiter who brings whatever is great
 And Venus who brings everything that's fair!

Birth and Early Life

In Southern Germany, where the Neckar spreads its silver through vine clad hills, the poet Schiller first drew breath. He was born at Marbach, in Wurtemberg on November 10, 1759. Mothers count for much in the lives of men, and the mother of Schiller counted much in his. Though small in stature she was great in soul, being a deep lover of nature and of music and an ardent student of the poets. Furthermore, her piety was very simple and sincere. There is a lovely incident recorded how once, on an Easter Monday walking with her little girl and boy over the hills she told them with so much fervour of the two disciples who met Christ when they were walking to Emmaus that, when they reached the hill top mother and children knelt together in fervent prayer.

The father of the poet was engaged as an army doctor in the service of the Duke of Wurtemberg. The literary instinct was strong in him, and he also was a devout Christian. The son tells us how he delighted to kneel when his father led the

worship of the soldiers, and to join with them in prayer. In 1765 the father was raised to the rank of captain, and shortly afterwards transferred to Stein's regiment at Ludwigsburg, where the duke held his court. Here the boy Friedrich was brought into contact, for the first time, with operas and ballets, plays and masquerades, and took great delight in them.

When thirteen years old Schiller was drafted from the grammar school at Ludwigsburg into a military academy, and set, by order of the duke, to the study of medicine. According to his biographers, he was at this time an awkward youth of strange habits and an uncertain future. 'But in that young soul' as one has said, 'dwelt genius, that alchemy which converts all metals into gold, which from suffering educes strength, and from error clearer wisdom.' As time sped on he developed a growing passion for literature. Shakespeare, Rousseau, Plutarch, and Goethe were studied with fervent enthusiasm, and by them all the forces of his life were changed. Ere long he began to imitate that which he so keenly admired. He composed odes and sent them to the local papers. He tried his hand on a drama, which, however, he had the wisdom to destroy, and before he was nineteen he had completed some scenes of his first great play, *The Robbers*.

blow at the vices and cruelties of a corrupt aristocracy. From its beginning to its close it is charged with the pure intensity of passion, as a storm-cloud with lightning.

In July, 1783, Schiller returned to Mannheim, where he received an appointment as playwright to the theatre at a salary of about £50 a year. It was here that his *Plot and Passion* first appeared, the whole audience rising at its close to receive the author. Schiller was now twenty-six. In the April of 1785 he quitted Mannheim for Leipzig, and in the September of the same year he passed on to Dresden. Here, under the influence of genial and helpful companionships, Schiller expanded into a fuller, richer life. The period of unrest and gloom, of self-conflict and self-torture was past, and the wild, irregular power which stamps the productions of his youth gives way to repose and self-mastery.

The finest proof of this, which may be termed the intermediate period of the poet's literary activity, was the completed tragedy of *Don Carlos*.

'Don Carlos'

In this play blank verse is substituted for impassioned prose, and a noble gravity created by the suffering and the pathos of life takes the place of fiery indignation and revolt. The scene chosen for the play is Spain, and the time is the sixteenth

century, when the cold-blooded Philip is king, and his throne is encircled by cruel priests and remorseless inquisitors. The young, generous, but ill-fated Prince, Don Carlos, stands out in striking contrast to his father. From boyhood his heart has been bent on noble things. The cruelty of the Inquisitors is hateful to him. The despair and terror of the people under the grinding despotism of the government fills him with dismay. He is resolved that when he mounts the throne he will grant his subjects a larger freedom with purer laws. Of all this his father is cognizant, and his soul is consumed with jealousy. Yet further, his wife, Elizabeth of Valois, was originally betrothed to Don Carlos before her union, for reasons of state, with the king, and he fears that she still loves his son. These influences, combined with the hate of the Inquisitors, who look forward to the limitation of their power if the son should reign, expose Don Carlos to an unjust sentence and a cruel death.

That is a fine dialogue in which Donna Leonora, who is companion to the Queen, replies to the question of Philip as to how his son, the former lover of the Queen, is received by her.

Philip I ask you how the Queen receives our son.

Leonora I know not well to answer

Philip

Yet my words

Are plain and simple

Storm and Stress

In the year 1780 Schiller became a surgeon in the Wurtemberg army, at a salary of about £20 a year. In the summer of 1781, having completed *The Robbers*, he published it at his own cost. It at once excited great interest. But the vehement revolutionary spirit which found in it such fiery and forceful utterance was very objectionable to the Grand Duke, who forbade the poet to cross the borders of the little state or to write another word except on the science of medicine. The play was performed for the first time in January, 1782, at Mannheim, a town outside the Wurtemberg territory. In the early summer of the same year Schiller paid a stolen visit to the place to see it acted. For this breach of discipline he was put under arrest for fourteen days. He now resolved to bid farewell to pipeclay and petty despotism, and, having paid a visit to his parents, he fled to Mannheim with the resolve to devote his life to literature. He was at last a free man a poet, with God's great universe before him. 'All my connexions,' he wrote, 'are now dissolved. The public is now all to me, my study, my sovereign, my confidant. Something majestic hovers before me, as I determine now to wear no other fetters but the sentence of the world, to

appeal to no other throne than the soul of man' Brave words these, words coming from a brave soul, but the road to fame had to be trod by Schiller with bleeding feet, and sometimes with a resolve half baffled by despair. He proves to the full the truth of the lines—

Who neer his bread in sorrow ate,
 Who neer the mournful midnight hours
 Weeping upon his bed has sate—
 He knows ye not ye heavenly powers

In place of the welcome for which he hoped at Mannheim, Schiller was received with coldness and suspicion. He hoped to secure a permanent position on the staff of its dramatic authors, but the management were afraid of the untamed energy of the author of *The Robbers*.

'*The Robbers*'

This play was, indeed, the product of the bold and frenzied imagination which attacks rather than examines, and which assails with the rude energy of unreasoning youth the social anomalies which offend its enthusiasm. The poet himself confessed, in after years, that his chief fault was in 'presuming to delineate men two years before he had met one'. Despite its extravagance, however, this tragedy exhibited a wild impassioned strength which

was full of promise for the after years of its author
 The scene on the hill beside the Danube, where,
 musing on the past, Charles Moor, the desperate
 hero of the play, thinks of the time 'when he could
 not sleep if his evening prayer had been forgotten,'
 is one of thrilling power

Amelia, who loves Moor, despite his career as
 a frenzied desperado, is a beautiful creation She
 wanders through the play like a moonbeam among
 ruins, and Schiller's power as a writer of songs is
 seen in the lines sung by her to her lute

Bright with an angel's brightness pure and deep
 More beautiful than aught of earth was he
 Mild as the sunbeams where its soft beams sleep
 In summer on the blue and glassy sea

With him—beneath the shelter of his arm—
 The holy night around us and above!
 Two hearts with but one mighty feeling warm
 Borne upwards to the glorious heaven of love

Two living fires that in one flame unite
 Two harps in one sweet note of music blending
 Two spirits wrapt within a cloud of light,
 In high and solemn harmony ascending

Soul to its kindred soul—they run they fly
 They faint they tremble with excess of bliss,
 The cold earth melts around them and the sky
 For what has earth to do with hours like this?

He is away The music is departed
 The fire is quenched the sunshine is grown dim
 He is away and to the broken hearted
 Life is but one long weary thought of him

blow at the vices and cruelties of a corrupt aristocracy. From its beginning to its close it is charged with the pure intensity of passion, as a storm cloud with lightning.

In July, 1783, Schiller returned to Mannheim, where he received an appointment as playwright to the theatre at a salary of about £50 a year. It was here that his *Plot and Passion* first appeared, the whole audience rising at its close to receive the author. Schiller was now twenty-six. In the April of 1785 he quitted Mannheim for Leipzig, and in the September of the same year he passed on to Dresden. Here, under the influence of genial and helpful companionships Schiller expanded into a fuller, richer life. The period of unrest and gloom, of self conflict and self torture was past and the wild, irregular power which stamps the productions of his youth gives way to repose and self mastery.

The finest proof of this which may be termed the intermediate period of the poet's literary activity, was the completed tragedy of *Don Carlos*.

Don Carlos

In this play blank verse is substituted for impassioned prose and a noble gravity created by the suffering and the pathos of life takes the place of fiery indignation and revolt. The scene chosen for the play is Spain and the time is the sixteenth

century, when the cold blooded Philip is king, and his throne is encircled by cruel priests and remorseless inquisitors. The young, generous, but ill fated Prince, Don Carlos, stands out in striking contrast to his father. From boyhood his heart has been bent on noble things. The cruelty of the Inquisitors is hateful to him. The despair and terror of the people under the grinding despotism of the government fills him with dismay. He is resolved that when he mounts the throne he will grant his subjects a larger freedom with purer laws. Of all this his father is cognizant, and his soul is consumed with jealousy. Yet further, his wife, Elizabeth of Valois was originally betrothed to Don Carlos before her union for reasons of state, with the king, and he fears that she still loves his son. These influences, combined with the hate of the Inquisitors, who look forward to the limitation of their power if the son should reign, expose Don Carlos to an unjust sentence and a cruel death.

That is a fine dialogue in which Donna Leonora, who is companion to the Queen replies to the question of Philip as to how his son the former lover of the Queen is received by her

Philip I ask you how the Queen receives our son.

Leonora I know not well to answer

Philip

Yet my words

Are plain and simple

Leonora Sire! indeed—

Philip Reply,

I must have truth

Leonora Then sire behold the truth

Her usual air appears as if she mocked

The state she wears, the jewels of the crown

But shade her lustre all the royal pomp

Makes her not proud but sad the dignity

That doth befit Castile she casts aside

As if it soiled her purity of heart

But if Don Carlos in her presence stands

Then like a statue starting into life

Her cheeks blush deep with rosy streams her eyes

Glow with unusual fires her arm her hand

No longer move with languor, all her frame

In animated gesture speaks the soul

Though still her timid modesty of mind

Tempers with grace the beauty of her mien

Philip She welcomes him?

Leonora Yes Sire such welcome gives

As when upon the dark blank world the sun

Pours forth his beams when undistinguished space

Grows rich with meaning hill and lake and plain

Glitter in new born light and hail the day

Such is the Queen when to our quiet hours

Don Carlos gives his leisure

In another part of the tragedy we have the following answer from the lips of the Queen to the question urged by the King as to whether she deems Don Carlos innocent or guilty of treason

Queen. Sire of the Prince I speak
As I have seen him easily inflamed
And catching fire in every generous cause

Suffering with every sufferer , sharing loss
With every loser in the game of life,
A soul ennobled by companionship
With lofty thoughts and mighty purposes ,
Hating all wrong and scourging with a rod
Of scorn contemptuous the sloth of vice ,
Yet with proud bearing throwing back the praise
Our courtiers trade in for their private gain ,
This sternness makes him enemies but still
His heart is to his duty riveted ,
Nor lives there of your subject millions one
Whom malice with more rancour would accuse
Or virtue with more confidence defend

Schiller's Ballads

We now enter on the third period of Schiller's development as a writer. Many things have contributed to his enlargement and to a truer knowledge of life and its issues. He has communed with Goethe, and imbibed something of his philosophic calm, together with his wide and luminous views of truth. He has taught history in the University of Jena, and learnt that the seeming chaos of events is under divine control and that the history of the world is the judgement of the world. He has studied the philosophy of Kant, and realized that the love of the Beautiful must be linked with the love of the True and the Good, that heroic elevation of character can only spring from the enthronement of Duty over passion and desire, and that freedom must be founded on morality, while

morality is based on religion. His father and sister have passed into the unseen, and left him listening at the portal, and lastly, he has found a wife who is at once wife and comrade, and who diffuses sunshine through his troubled world. Strengthened by these influences, he girds himself for a yet nobler service. To this period belong not only his greater dramas, *Wallenstein*, *Mary Stuart*, *The Maid of Orleans*, and *William Tell*, but also those lyrics and ballads through which he has sung his way into the heart of the world. Before Schiller the ballad² was a simple narrative attractively told, but in his hands it is invested with dramatic dignity. Our souls are thrilled with terror as we plunge with 'The Diver' into the seething abyss of waters, while 'The Lay of the Bell' is the lay of the life of man in his toil, his tears, and his last sleep when toil and tears are over.

His mode of dealing with classical subjects may be illustrated by the following verses from his ballad 'Hero and Leander'

Flat sea which rent a world can not
Rend Love from Love asunder!

What marvel then that wind and wave
Leander doth but burn to brave
When Love that goads him guides!
Still when the day with fainter glimmer
Wanes pale—he leaps the daring swimmer
Amid the darkening tides
With lusty arms he cleaves the waves
And strives for that dear strand afar
Where high from Hero's lonely tower
Lone streams the Beacon star

Meanwhile the lover has paid the price of his
daring He is engulfed in the angry sea His
body is washed up at the maiden's feet, and in
her despair she springs into the wave where he
has found a tomb

Flashed the white robe along the air
And from the tower that beetled there
She sprang into the wave
Roused from his throne beneath the waste
Those holy forms the god embraced—
A god himself their grave!
Pleased with his prey he glides along—
More blithe the murmured music seems
A gush from unexhausted urns
His Everlasting Streams!

With clanking chains and a new god she sweeps
 And with a thousand thunders, unto thee!
 The ocean castles and the floating hosts—
 Neer on their like looked the wild waters!—Well
 May man the monster name 'Invincible'
 O'er shuddering waves she gathers to thy coasts!
 The horror that she spreads can claim
 Just title to her haughty name
 The trembling Neptune quails
 Under the silent and majestic forms,
 The Doom of Worlds in those dark sails —
 Near and more near they sweep! and slumber all the Storms!

Before thee, the array,
 Blest island Empress of the Sea!
 The sea born squadrons threaten thee
 And thy great heart *BRITANNIA!*

One look below the Almighty gave
 Where streamed the lion flags of thy proud foe,
 And near and wider yawned the horrent grave
 And who saith He shall lay mine England low—
 The stem that blooms with hero-deeds—
 The rock when man from wrong a refuge needs—
 The stronghold where the tyrant comes in vain?
 Who shall bid England vanish from the main?
 Neer be this only Eden Freedom knew
 Man's stout defence from Power, to Fate consigned
 God the Almighty blew
 And the Armada went to every wind!

The ballads of Schiller are never without some profitable meaning. They not only sing but teach.

'The Diver' seems to say to us, 'Be bold but not too bold' It illustrates the contest of

man with the stern forces of Nature, and the certainty of a pitiless penalty if he defies her laws

'The Lay of the Bell' is a tribute to the dignity of labour and the mastery of man, while it records the solemn progress of his life from the cradle to the marriage festival, and from thence to the inexorable grave

To solemn and eternal things
We dedicate her lips sublime!—
As hourly calmly on she swings—
Fanned by the fleeting wings of time!—
No pulse—no heart—no feeling hers!
She lends the warning voice to Fate,
And still companions while she stirs,
The changes of the human State!
So may she teach us, as her tone
But now so mighty, melts away—
That earth no life which earth has known
From the last silence can delay

In the ballad entitled 'The Glove' we have the lesson taught that woman's beauty may ask too much from its adorer, and cruel caprice may find its penalty in resultant scorn

In 'The Sharing of the Earth' we have as beautiful a fancy as can be found in song. The Father of all is represented as apportioning the earth to his children. The field is given to the farmer, the forest and the chase to the squire, commerce to the merchant, the sea to the mariner,

and the toll of the nation to the King, until all is disposed of. Then the poet appears and asks what he is to receive who has loved the great Giver best of all

Woe is me is there nothing remaining
For the son who best loves thee alone!
Thus to Jove went his voice in complaining
As he fell at the Thunderers throne.

In the land of the dreams if abiding
Quoth the god— Canst thou murmur at ME?
Where wert thou when the Earth was dividing?
I was said the poet, by THEE!

Mine eye by thy glory was captured—
Mine ear by thy music of bliss,
Pardon him whom thy world so enraptured—
As to lose him his portion in this!

'Alas said the god— Earth is given!
Field forest and market and all!—
What say you to quarters in Heaven?
We'll admit you whenever you call!

The Greater Dramas

Turning now from these lighter themes, we revert to the great dramas which have given to Schiller an *enduring fame*. His best work was produced for the stage because he believed the acted play had a great mission in the world. He cherished the idea that it was possible to make the stage a great moral power in society. He held that the superior drama should assist the laws

of a nation in the support of virtue Hence the time and labour which he devoted to his dramas, some of which will live as long as the language in which they are written In his *Mary Stuart*, we have one of the most pathetic of all tragedies His *Bride of Messina* possesses an artistic completeness and a beauty of language which take the spirit of the reader captive His *William Tell* shouts of liberty like an Alpine torrent thundering through an Alpine gorge while his *Maid of Orleans*, though dealing with a subject the tragic significance of which no poet's touch could heighten, is lifted by him into an atmosphere of sublimity as lofty as his own exalted mind It lends itself magnificently to quotation In proof of which we append the passage in which the warrior maid rebukes, by a splendid prophecy of future victory, the timid counsels of one who predicts failure and defeat for France.

daughters was basely assailed We see in William Tell a type of lofty patriotism the incarnation of energy, simplicity and truth befitting a man who lives in daily communion with the grandest forms of Nature

It is only too probable that neither Tell, the hero of the drama, nor his antagonist the despot Gessler, ever existed except in fiction These facts however, do not decrease the value of Schiller's drama Its subject is the assertion of their national independence by the Swiss people who in fact take the place of the hero of the play

In *William Tell* nothing is said in favour of that wild destructive liberty of which Franz Moor declaimed so passionately in *The Robbers* Wider knowledge has chastened the poet's thought, and it is of freedom united with order and defended by venerable tradition that he writes in his last completed play We append one noble passage in which Stauffacher, a Swiss patriot speaks resenting the base rule of Gessler and asserting the right of the people to the land which they have cultivated and made fruitful by their labour

" For prey were all destroyed the dense grey fogs
 That hung o'er fenny pastures were dispersed
 The rocks were rent asunder over chasms
 Were flung these bridges to make safe the way
 For passengers —ay by a thousand charms
 The land is ours for ever!—Shall we bear it
 That this the creature of a foreign lord
 Shall here insult us on our own free soil?
 Is there no help for us? Must we bear this?—
 No!—there's a limit to the tyrant's power
 When men oppressed can find no aid on earth
 To rid them of their burden then they rise
 The people rise they stretch their hands to heaven
 And thence fetch down their old eternal rights
 Their rights all—like the everlasting lights
 There shining in the heavens—unchangeable
 Imperishable as the stars themselves!—
 Then Nature's own primeval rule returns
 Man stands in battle ready for the foe
 'Tis our last means but when all others fail
 We draw the sword!—The best of all life's boons
 We will defend!—In front of this our land
 And of our wives and children here we stand!

Wallenstein

The genius of Schiller culminates in his *Wallenstein* which with the one exception of Goethe's *Faust* is probably the mightiest dramatic creation given to the world since Shakespeare laid down his magic pen. First published in 1799 it really occupied the mind of its author for seven years. Too vast in its range for a single representation it is divided into three sections which claimed for

their exposition three successive nights They are entitled, *Wallenstein's Camp*, *The Piccolomini*, and *Wallenstein's Death* The first portion of the play introduces us to the camp with its tumultuous host of warriors, rugged and violent, but obedient to the will of Wallenstein as the chafing sea to the moon He is the great figure in this world of war—'the model,' as Carlyle describes him, 'of a high souled, accomplished man, whose ruling passion is ambition' His daring is magnificent, but it is restrained by a prudence which exaggerates the importance of trifles His purposes are yet further weakened by a superstitious study of astrology In vain his generals implore him to act with decision, and to seek his star of fate in his own breast' He will not move unless according to his fancy, the heavens approve his action

It must be night ere Friedland's star can shine

There is a fine passage in the second part of the tragedy in which Illo, the Field Marshal and faithful friend of Wallenstein, urges him to action

Illo Seize seize the hour
 Ere it slips from you Seldom comes the moment
 In life which is indeed sublime and weighty
 To make a great decision possible
 Oh! many things all transient and all rapid
 Must meet at once, and, haply, they thus met
 May by that confluence be enforced to pause
 Time long enough for wisdom though too short,

Far far too short a time for doubt and scruple!
 This is that moment See our army chieftains,
 Our best our noblest are assembled round you
 Their kinglike leader! On your nod they wait
 The single threads which here your prosperous fortune
 Hath woven together in one potent web
 Instinct with destiny O let them not
 Unravel of themselves If you permit
 These chiefs to separate so unanimous
 Bring you them not a second time together
 'Tis the high tide that heaves the stranded ship
 And every individual's spirit waxes
 In the great stream of multitudes Behold
 They are still here here still! But soon the war
 Bursts them once more asunder and in small
 Particular anxieties and interests
 Scatters their spirit and the sympathy
 Of each man with the whole. He who to-day
 Forgets himself forced onward with the stream
 Will become sober seeing but himself
 Feel only his own weakness and with speed
 Will face about, and march on in the old
 High road of duty the old broad trodden road
 And seek but to make shelter in good plight

Wal The time is not yet come

Ter

So you say always

But when will it be time?

Wal

When I shall say it

Illo You'll wait upon the stars and on the r hours
 Till the earthly hour escapes O believe me
 In your bosom are your destiny's stars
 Confidence in yourself prompt resolution
 This is your *Venus!* and the sole malignant
 The only one that harmeth you is *doubt*

Hesitation and uncertainty however still dog
 the steps and hinder the progress of Wallenstein

He will not act until some sign in heaven impels him and the last division of the play, entitled 'Wallenstein's Death' shows how the uncertainty of the great soldier involves him at last in destruction at the hands of the assassin. That is a touching scene in which, having at last resolved on action, he waits for that morrow which for him will never dawn. The Countess Terzky, sister to his wife, is with him in the chamber where in a few hours he is destined to meet his fate. Gloomy forebodings gather on his soul. At last, turning to the window, he looks out into the night.

Wal (moves to the window) There is a busy motion in the heaven

The wind doth chase the flag upon the tower

Fast sweep the clouds the sickle of the moon

Struggling darts snatches of uncertain light.

No form of star is visible! That one

White star of light, that single glimmering yonder

Is from Cassiopeia and therein

Is Jupiter (*A pause*) But now

The blackness of the troubled element hides him!

(He sinks into profound melancholy and looks vacantly into the distance)

Coun (looks on him mournfully then grasps his hand)

What art thou brooding on?

Wal

Methinks

If I but saw him, twould be well with me

He is the star of my nativity

And often marvellously hath his aspect

S'ot strength into my heart.

Alas! it will shoot strength into it no more for

already the footsteps of his assassin are stumbling through the night, and the grey light of morning will break upon the corpse of Wallenstein. Vaulting ambition has 'o'erleaped itself and fallen on the other side'

Friendship with Goethe

Not the least of the influences exerted by Schiller for the exaltation of literature and the illumination of the world was that which he exercised on the mind and work of Goethe. In his friendship with that greater one he fulfilled a friend's noblest ministry by shaping his life to finer issues. His first interview with Goethe left much to be desired. Little enthusiasm was evinced on either side and it was evident that they neither knew nor understood each other. A year later Schiller writes not without a touch of bitterness 'This man this Goethe is once and for all in my way and he too reminds me how hardly Fate has dealt with me. Destiny has borne *his* genius lightly forward whilst I have had nothing but fighting and striving up to this very minute'. Later still the might of Goethe's genius is revealed to him and he confesses in a letter to Körner without a touch of jealousy, that compared with Goethe he was a blockhead. In the September of 1794 the poets approached each other more closely. Goethe invited Schiller

to spend a fortnight with him at Weimar. During that visit a friendship was cemented which continued until Schiller's death. This friendship proved helpful to both but especially to Goethe. For some considerable time Goethe had practically forsaken literature, and had become absorbed in science. With ample means, and utterly independent of the world's opinion, he was losing sight of his true vocation, and was growing hard and unsympathetic. Schiller's influence however, came to him like the breath of spring upon the frozen earth. The ice thawed, and the flowers bloomed again. 'He saved me,' says Goethe, 'from the charnel house of science, and gave me back to poetry and life'. At another time, writing to Schiller, he said 'You have created for me a second youth and have again made me a poet, which I had almost ceased to be.

Thus did the nobleness of Schiller create or quicken nobleness in all with whom he came into immediate contact.

Meanwhile Schiller had entered on a new undertaking. As a means of raising the public taste he decided to issue a new periodical to be called *Horen* or *The Hours*. To this Goethe became a contributor, and they were thus brought into closer contact with each other. When the *Horen* died, shattered on that rock of stupidity, against which, as Schiller says 'the gods themselves are powerless'

poet heritage. A few murmured words of tenderness to his wife were then spoken and the next day he 'out soared the shadow of our night'

Goethe mourned the loss of his friend with a deep and noble sorrow, and Germany itself sighed when it heard that 'the poet of liberty' was no more. 'Death cannot be an evil,' he had said 'for it is universal'. Such was Schiller's magnificent trust in the Power who presides over human destiny. No, death is not an evil it is merely the shadow of God as He stoops over life to change and to glorify it. Thus content and satisfied we leave Schiller in the higher kingdom of the Father, while he chants for us his own requiem in his own lines

Here crowned at last Love never knows decay
Living through ages its own Bridal Day
Safe from the stroke of Death

GOETHE

*Self-centred self-controlled a lonely clout
Losed in the boundless universe of space,
Now lighted up with a transient grace
And now as pallid as a funeral shroud*

- *A thinker, brooding deeply on the shore
Where break the vast, unfathomable seas
Of those divinely guarded mysteries
Which mortals vainly labour to explore*

R. P. D.

The greatest poet of the present age and the greatest critic of all ages.—MATTHEW ARNOLD

ALTHOUGH so much has been said and written about Goethe he still attracts us because he is still unfathomed and unexplained. If we are to accept the dictum of Carlyle that, in order to see, we must first oversee it is not probable that Goethe will ever be mastered since, in order to do this the critic must be greater than his subject, and such a Titan is not likely to appear.

Yet, further, it is not the greatness of Goethe alone which baffles us, but his complexity and, as we must needs admit, his glaring inconsistency. All surveying masterful, illuminating lofty, yet

selfish, sensual, un pitying, and mean. Intuitive, impulsive, impassioned, yet steadily conscious of his range of power. A supreme poet, and yet a writer of the very feeblest prose. An exacting moralist, and yet, when passion and desire intervene, personally heedless of all moral sanctities. A philosopher and a scientist, anticipating some of the finest results of modern research, and yet a dreamer and a mystic summoning strange spirits from the vasty deep. The very sanest of modern thinkers and critics, and yet in his sentimental romances the most extravagant and hysterical of authors. A preacher of self denial as the only path to greatness, yet himself one of the most selfish of men—who can explain this man Goethe?

In the study of Shakespeare we get the impression that the product is greater than the man. In the study of Goethe we feel that the man is greater than his work. Had he devoted himself exclusively to poetry, in place of dealing with all knowledge, he would probably have stood next to Homer and Shakespeare among the builders of

Nevertheless, he has not been unfitly called the Shakespeare of Germany

Not seldom we survey the colossal intelligence of this great German with a feeling akin to awe His presence recalls the utterance, 'The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men' He is, however, a god of pagan, not of Christian mould Essentially self centred and self pleasing, there is in him no resemblance to that Blessed One whose sanctity nothing could stain, and whose celestial pity passed no sorrow by, and whose intercourse with heaven was natural and familiar as His vision of the lilies of the field

A master in the realm of the intellect, Goethe was still in the moral world a mere pigmy Blind worshippers of genius have apologized for his vices, and have reasoned as if a man of commanding intellect should be pardoned every excursion into the realms of passion We earnestly exhort them to get rid of cant and to remember that where much is given much is required There is nothing in Goethe which condones for his selfish treatment of the women who were attracted by his genius as the moth by the flame, and our moral sense is insulted by George Lewes when, in his *Life of the poet*, he says of one of his victims 'It was no slight thing even to be jilted by such a man' No, we may admire Goethe in a limited degree, but we cannot

reverence him His moral defects together with his self centred life, render this impossible We yield to his transcendent powers the tribute of an intellectual homage If asked to go further, we give the reply which he himself puts into the mouth of Prometheus when addressing his deity

I reverence thee? Wherefore?
 Hast thou ever lightened the v'pes
 Of the heavily laden?
 Hast thou ever stilled the tears
 Of the troubled in spirit?

Birth and Early Life

Johann Wolfgang Goethe was born at Frankfort on August 28 1749 He was favoured in the place of his birth since at that time Frankfort was to Germany what London is to England A free large life pulsed through its quaint old streets while merchants of the East as well as of the West spread their wares in its markets Goethe's father was a prosperous burgher fond of art and literature with a deep seriousness of intellect and a severe love of order The mother of the poet was much younger than his father being only eighteen when Goethe was born They thus grew up more like brother and sister than mother and son and were in perfect sympathy Her habitual cheerfulness of temper and love of story telling together with her

genial outlook on the world largely influenced her illustrious son

His religious feelings found early expression When only six years of age he formed an extempore altar on which he burned pastilles lighted from the sun by means of a burning glass as incense to the great God of Nature The earthquake at Lisbon in 1755 pressed rudely on him the mystery of things and perplexed his childish intellect with the problem as to how such disasters could be reconciled with the love of God

His secular education was wisely ordered for he was well grounded not only in Latin and Greek but also in French English and Italian Thus the avenues were opened for him to the literary treasures of the world During the occupation of Frankfort by the French early in 1759 Count Therane a French officer of considerable culture was quartered on his father Through him Goethe became familiar with French literature and imbibed a love for the drama which remained with him through life

To the influence of beauty in women he was in the highest degree sensitive and we are startled by the stories which he himself tells of his various youthful attachments and how they were concluded However transitory for the most part was the effect of Goethe's early loves it is certain that one

of them struck deep since in his fifteenth year a serious illness resulted from the sudden termination of a romantic love affair with a girl named Gretchen, whose friends were of doubtful reputation

Immediately on his recovery, his father sent him to the University of Leipzig to study jurisprudence. Here, however, he paid more attention to poetry than to law, and developed the habit, which remained with him through life, of converting, as he describes it, into a living image, into a song, whatever pleased or pained him. By thus translating feeling into utterance and giving to his imaginings a definite shape Goethe fitted himself for the vocation of a poet. He sang what he felt. He became a lyrist of his own emotions and experiences. 'All my works' he said on one occasion, 'are but fragments of the grand confession of my life'

Early Poems

The first poem from his pen which has been preserved is that entitled 'Thoughts on Jesus Christ's Descent into Hell'. It was written in his sixteenth year. Though not without promise it is still little more than a rhapsody and seems to have been inspired by the study of Klopstock. We append two verses from the translation of E. A. Bowring.

A howling rises through the air
 A trembling fills each dark vault there,
 When Christ to Hell is seen to come
 She snarls with rage but needs must cower
 Before our mighty hero's power
 He signs—and Hell is straightway dumb
 Before His voice the thunders break
 On high His victor banner blows,
 E'en angels at this fury quake,
 When Christ to the dread judgement goes

The God man closed Hell's sad doors
 In all His majesty He soars
 From those dark regions back to light
 He sitteth at the Father's side
 Oh friends what joy doth this betide!
 For us for us He still will fight!
 The angels sacred quire around
 Rejoice before the mighty Lord
 So that all creatures hear the sound
 Zeboath's God be ay adored!

Two years after writing 'The Descent into Hell' Goethe composed his earliest drama founded on one of his flirtations, and entitled The Lover's Whim. This was followed by a comedy of three acts, called The Accomplishes. This comedy bears the stamp received from the study of Molière and Corneille. Meanwhile, a mightier spell was working in the mind of the young aspirant to fame for he was reading Shakespeare, Lessing, and Herder Oeser, the director of the Drawing Academy at Leipzig, was also developing his love for the beautiful and the true. Writing of him to a friend, he says

' His instruction will influence my whole life He it was who taught me that the ideal of beauty is simplicity and repose and thence it follows that no youth can be a master

Meanwhile in 1768 another love affair, combined with dissipation and reckless living brought on a serious attack of hæmorrhage and he was recalled home to Frankfurt From this period we must date the gentle influence of his sister Cornelia over his restless and fiery spirit. Amid the sheltering sanctities of home his health was soon restored and he became the lion of his native city Hand some as an Apollo and inspired with a keen zest of living he kindled enthusiasm wherever he went sometimes indulging in the maddest freaks and extravagances He came upon you said one who knew him well at the time like a wolf in the night His commanding presence combined with brilliant conversational gifts made him specially attractive to girls and his perils in this regard were accentuated by his disposition passionately to abandon himself to the feelings of the moment without looking forward to the consequences In his conduct with regard to women we are reminded of that picture from the pencil of Titian in our own National Gallery where Bacchus is represented as leaping from his chariot amid the clash of cymbals and the dance of Fauns to capture the flying Ariadne

Thus Goethe burst upon his victims, and when t
 of them remounted his chariot and sped on
 thing can absolve him from the charge of heartle
 ness, and the cool way in which he abandons
 prey is even more offensive than the hot impu
 which urges him to the chase

Strasburg and Frederika

In the year 1769, his health being fully restore
 he went to Strasburg to prosecute his legal studies
 but art and poetry were once more too strong fo
 him, and law was subordinated to their influence
 Still wayward and untamed he would ascend to
 the gallery of the cathedral and, with certain boot
 companions, salute the setting sun with brimming
 goblets of Rhine wine. His idea of life at this
 time might have been fitly expressed in the lines
 from his own pen

When head and heart are whirling wild,
 What better can be found?
 The man who neither loves nor errs
 Were better underground.

Far below the Cathedral of Strasburg, in the
 green valley, lay Sesenheim, the home of Frederika
 the daughter of the simple-hearted pastor of the
 village and the sweetest of all the objects of his
 love To this lovely girl, with her graceful figure,
 her rich masses of fair hair, her dark, blue eyes

and finely moulded features, Goethe came like some grand being out of an unknown world. How was it possible for her to resist him? It was not possible, and in response to his fervour her heart throbbed with love, and pride, and joy. In his autobiography the poet gives a bewitching description of his romantic passion for this village nymph, and we owe to it some of the sweetest love lyrics ever given to the world. They are, however, so delicate in structure that they suffer terribly in the hands of the translator and come to us very much like a butterfly which some rude boy has soiled and broken in his effort to capture it.

Prudential considerations, coupled with Goethe's unhallowed and selfish love of liberty, led to the separation of the lovers. The utter dependence of Goethe on his father, who would have opposed his marriage to the utmost, may be alleged as one excuse for his infidelity. The probability, as Mr Lewes suggests, that the wood nymph of Sesenheim would have seemed a peasant in the *salons* of Strasburg may be urged as another. Nevertheless, Goethe never sought to justify his treatment of Frederike. The act stung him with remorse and shame. The maiden herself uttered no complaint. When her sun had set still in the moonlight of tender memory, she wandered in the romantic world which the poet had created for her feet,

though she must wander there alone To worthier men who sought in the aftertime to win her hand her answer was 'The heart that Goethe has loved cannot belong to another

Goethe's Lyric Power

Before passing on to other aspects of Goethe's life and work we pause to call attention to his lyric power. His lyrics have a freshness and a lightness of touch which equals in this realm the charm of Shelley or of Tennyson. Their spontaneity and truth attract us at a glance and we realize that they flow from the heart of the writer like a stream from its fountain or like perfume from a flower. They illustrate also the service rendered by Goethe to his native language. Created as an instrument of thought by Luther it was perfected by Goethe. Like a cunning worker in glass he took the crude hard forms of the national tongue fused them by the breath of his genius and gave them whatever shape he willed. As an example of this cunning mastery of language we append the following version by George Lewes of the ballad entitled The Fisherman

The water rised, the water rilled
A fisherman sat by
And gazed upon his dancing float
With tranquil dreaming eye

And as he sits, and as he looks,
The gurgling waves arise,
A maid all bright with water-drops
Stands straight before his eyes

She sang to him, she spake to him
‘My fish why dost thou snare
With human wit and human guile
Into the killing air?
Couldst see how happy fishes live
Under the stream so clear,
Thyself would plunge into the stream,
And live for ever there

‘Bathe not the lovely sun and moon
Within the cool deep sea,
And with wave breathing faces rise
In twofold witchery?
Lure not the misty heaven-deeps,
So beautiful and blue?
Lures not thine image mirrored in
The fresh eternal dew?

The water rushed, the water swelled,
It clasped his feet, I wis,
A thrill went through his yearning heart,
As when two lovers kiss!
She spake to him she sang to him,
Resistless was her strain,
She drew him in, she lured him in,
He neer was seen again!

One of the ablest of Goethe's critics pronounces him to be unquestionably the greatest lyrical poet of all times and nations. This is high praise, yet it must be admitted that many of his ballads and minor poems are gems of art, and most delicate

and touching records of human feeling. In the fascinating melody of their verse, the lucid and flawless beauty of their expression; in their presentation of romantic scenes so vividly realistic, yet so subtly suggestive of what is mysterious and ideal, they convey the impression of a harp in the air, and we are directly conscious of the magic touch of a true poet. In these dainty ballads we feel the poet does but sing because he must, as the thrush sings when spring is in the glade, or the lark when morning fills the sky.

What a depth of philosophy in regard to the fine relation, divinely ordered, between unconscious Nature and the living creatures she is appointed to sustain, lurks in the lines

From the cold earth in earliest spring
A flower peeped out—dear fragrant thing!
Then sipped a bee as half afraid,
Sure each was for the other made

In the year 1773 Goethe published his first great drama, *Goetz von Berlichingen with the Iron Hand*. Goetz was a valiant knight who fought for justice and for freedom in the Peasants' War of the sixteenth century. The play was conceived in the spirit of Shakespeare, and was a protest against the arbitrary rules which at that time fettered dramatic poetry. This drama has this in common with Shakespeare, that its characters are not mere

puppets but real flesh and blood Its female portraits are also as delicate and correct as Shakespeares, which is not always the case with Goethe his art in this regard suffering from his inconsistency to woman

The year 1774 was marked by the publication of *The Sorrows of Werther*, a sentimental romance which made a remarkable impression It is the story of a mind diseased and is based on the miseries of a youth who forming an unhappy attachment to the wife of a friend, committed suicide because his love was hopeless The popularity of the book is explained by the fact that it struck the temper of the age, being, in substance, a declaration of the rights of feeling in opposition to the binding power of social relations To the English mind the book appears morbid and unhealthy, and the more so because in our only translation of it as Carlyle has said 'its melancholy is rendered maudlin and its hero reduced from the stately gloom of a broken hearted poet to the tearful wrangling of a dyspeptic tailor

Goethe at Weimar

Meanwhile the fame of Goethe had attracted the attention of a kindred spirit the young Duke Carl August of Saxe Weimar, and he invited the

poet to his court. Weimar at that time was very little known. It was reserved for Goethe to make it the intellectual centre of Germany. He went there in his twenty-seventh year and took everybody by storm. The Duke could not move without him, the Duchess delighted in his brilliant conversation, and Wieland, after meeting him three times, writes of him as 'the godlike man'. During the first ten years of his residence at Weimar, Goethe produced little that was really worthy of his genius. He seems to have abandoned himself almost entirely to the work of amusing the Duke, and for a considerable time their frolics and eccentricities were the scandal of the little state. Among the varied amusements of the court was that of private theatricals, over which Goethe presided, bringing out several pieces of his own composition, and sustaining the varied rôle of author, manager, and actor.

At Weimar Goethe came under the influence of the Baroness Charlotte von Stein, the wife of a gentleman attached to the court. Six years older than the poet, beautiful, gracious, talented, and sympathetic, this noble woman did much for the moulding of the poet's life. To her he looked as the kindler of his purest inspirations, the chaste rebuker of his follies, the healer of his sorrows, and the sweetener of his toils. There can be no

doubt that this pure Platonic affection did much for the development of the spiritual part of the poet's nature

Two Years in Italy

In the July of 1786 the poet left Weimar for a residence of nearly two years in Italy, and the effect was a complete transformation in his life and work. The vision of the mighty world which had loved, and sung, and expressed its ideals of grace and beauty in glowing pictures and enduring marbles when the Germans were mere barbarians, startled him with its significance, as it has startled poets and artists ever since. 'The world,' he wrote, 'opens itself to me more and more.' Even the things that I have long known become now for the first time my own. The dead authors and artists lived and moved around him as he saw the spot where Dante first looked upon the face of Beatrice, the tomb in which Michael Angelo slumbered, and the canvases which Raphael had crowded with ideal beauty. Henceforward his literary motto was, 'Ideal beauty, gained by harmonious symmetry, and full of simplicity, dignity, and calm.' Hitherto his works had been steeped in the German element which surrounded him, they were now to be transformed by the classic spirit.

The first fruit of this transformation was his *Iphigenia*, which, existing before in imperfect prose, was recast into poetry, amid the witching scenes of the Bay of Naples and the orange-trees and oleanders of Palermo. The *Iphigenia* of Goethe is a lovely dramatic poem rather than a play. In it the Greek story of Euripides is modernized, and Iphigenia in place of being represented as a pagan priestess, is invested with the tender, delicate soul of a Christian maiden, whose religious conceptions are far in advance of those expressed by the Greek poet.

Another lovely result of Goethe's Italian tour is the tragedy of *Terquato Tasso*. This, again, is a perfect specimen of classical elegance, belonging to the same great school as *Iphigenia*, although the characters are of a later period, and the scene is placed not in ancient Greece, but beneath a modern Italian sky. The charm of the play, as in *Iphigenia*, consists in the harmonious flow of its language, the poetic beauty of its images, the exquisite delicacy of its sentiment, the elevation and grasp of its thought, and the natural evolution of character which it represents. It is founded upon the residence of Tasso in the court of Ferrara, at the time which was signalized by the completion of his great poem. The passionate, but hopeless, love of Tasso for the Princess is finely depicted,

and the classic mould is magnificently broken by the wild impulse of Goethe in the scene where, the Princess drawing near to Tasso, in pleading tenderness he thus speaks and then clasps her to his bosom

A charm unspeakable which masters me
Flows from thy lips Thou makest me all thine
Of my own being nought belongs to me
Mine eye grows dim in the excess of light
My senses fail me I can scarcely stand

Thou drawst me to thee with resistless might
And my heart rushes self impelled to thee
Thou hast won me now for all eternity,
Then take my whole of being to thyself

These classical plays of Goethe abound in those brief sentences into which the wisdom of years is crowded, those 'jewels five words long, which on the stretched forefinger of Old Time, sparkle for ever'

Take in evidence the following

Then only doth the heart know perfect ease
When not a stain pollutes it

Uncertainty around my anxious head
Her dusky thousand folded pinion waves

Talents are nurtured best in solitude
But character on life's tempestuous sea

He only fears mankind who knows them not
And he will soon misjudge them who avoids

The erring man would oft by vehemence
Compensate what he lacks in truth and power

Chance doth again disperse what chance collects
A noble nature can alone attract
The noble and retain them

The ground is hallowed where the good man treads
When centuries have passed his sons shall hear
The deathless echo of his words and deeds

The Receptivity of Goethe

One of the most striking characteristics of Goethe, as of Shakespeare is his boundless receptivity. His mind was a convex mirror receiving and reflecting all things in the universe. From him says Emerson nothing was hid nothing withholden. The lurking demons sat to him and the saint who saw the demons. The range of his faculties fills us with wonder. To a unique personality and a boundless capacity of self-expression he joined a marvellous sensibility to impressions from all outside him from men or women whether old or young from society, solitude and external nature from books and from life, from the ancient and modern world from art, from philosophy and from physical science. All these fed the flame of his genius and nurtured his intellectual being. Not vainly did he write

Spirit supreme! thou gav'st me gav'st me all
For which I asked thee. Not in vain hast thou
Turned towards me thy countenance a fire

Thou gav'st me wide Nature for my kingdom
And power to feel it and enjoy it Not the
Cold gaze of wonder gavst me thou alone,
But even into her bosoms depth to look,
As it might be the bosom of a friend
The grand array of living things thou madst
To pass before me madst me know my brothers
In silent bush in water and in air
Then didst thou guide me to the cave where safe
I learned to know myself and from my breast
Deep and mysterious wonders were unfolded

Goethe touches in his creations almost every element and situation in human life The conduct of life he made the subject of profound reflection, and no modern writer illuminates it with a light so clear and so steady Had he but cultivated his spiritual faculties as carefully as his mental powers he might have become one of the mightiest and most helpful instructors of the race

As a literary critic he is without a rival In this realm he exercised an intuitive insight and a sanity of judgement never surpassed He might also be called the greatest of art critics No man has said so many luminous things about the artist and the creative mind and mood His *Wilhelm Meister* is one of the greatest of all books It may be said to contain a complete philosophy of art and literature. It is a thousand pities that the excesses of the hero of the book should have been so presented that they inspire such a disgust in a pure-minded

reader that he often casts away the jewel because of the mire with which it is encrusted. The discerning student, however, will accept the good and reject the evil.

But even these things do not exhaust the extraordinary range of Goethe's activity. As a man of science he ranks among the foremost investigators of his age. He first suggested that idea of evolution which Darwin laboured to demonstrate, and which has changed the entire system of human thought with regard to the method of the divine activity. And in addition to all this he stands forth as the greatest poetic genius of modern times. To him the lines are specially appropriate which read

There is no great or small
To the Soul that maketh all
For where it cometh all things are
And it cometh everywhere

‘*Faust*

The extraordinary range of Goethe's activity makes it impossible in our space to review all the creations of his genius. Thus we omit any adequate notice of *Egmont*, with all its graphic delineation of the age of which it treats and of *Hermann and Dorothea* with its idyllic charm and concentrate our attention on the immortal *Faust*. This mighty

work was commenced in the year 1773 and was continued at intervals until 1790 when it was given to the world as a fragment. Several years later its author again took it in hand and it was not finally completed until 1806. 'The first child of Goethe's brain and the last which knew the touch of his hand the whole experience of his life is included in its pages. Although framed as a drama it cannot be acted in its completeness. It is better adapted for the study than for the stage. Its deep philosophy its glorious poetry its profound insight its symbolic significance cannot be expressed in mimic action. On the contrary they demand from the student the effort of days and then like all the greatest creations of genius their last word is still unuttered and whenever we return to them there is something more to learn. It is truly pitiful to see this great work crushed into three hours of stage representation. Its story when so set forth is so cruel that we hate the unfeeling pageant as it moves before us. We seem to participate in the mockery and laughter of hell over the wreck of human innocence and happiness. All the profounder meanings of the tragedy are lost.

Let us look at some of these meanings. And *first*, the work sets forth with wonderful subtlety the mystery of man's dual nature showing how

good and evil battle in him for the mastery Faust
himself says

Two souls alas! are lodged with in my breast
Which struggle there for undivided reign
One to the world with obstinate desire
And closely cleaving organs still adheres
Above the mist the other doth aspire
With sacred violence to purer spheres

Looking at the drama from one standpoint the two souls represented in the play as Faust and Mephistopheles may be regarded as one For poetic purposes however the light and the darkness are separated The mind that loves innocence and beauty and would cherish and bless it is confronted with the brutal and fiendish mind which would stain and destroy it Selfish passion has its way with the gentle victim and then remorse and penitence come in to rescue the struggling soul which loathes and despises its baser part

Looked at from another standpoint Mephistopheles may be said to represent the spirit of evil working darkly and cruelly in modern society The devil of Milton and the tempting fiend whom Luther depicted with so strong a hand are more or less antiquated and impossible but Goethe's devil with his cat like tread and his eternal sneer is in our midst to day In deference to modern ideas of refinement he has dispensed with cloven

foot, and horns, and tail, but he is a veritable devil still. He is utterly devoid of reverence. He respects neither the honour of man, nor the virtue of woman. Indeed, he questions the existence of both. If the happiness of worlds depended on his love he could not save them, for he could not love. He thinks meanly of all things, he himself being mean. The noble and the beautiful evade him, he can see only the false, the disgusting, and the unbeautiful. For him, man is no more than a blue-bottle fly creeping on a dung hill. He sees no glory in the toiling, suffering race. Nay, for him, heaven and hell, God and all His creatures, are summed up and dismissed in a sneer. Such is the devil at work in modern society, debasing and frivolizing life.

Yet, further, the story of Faust illustrates the truth, that

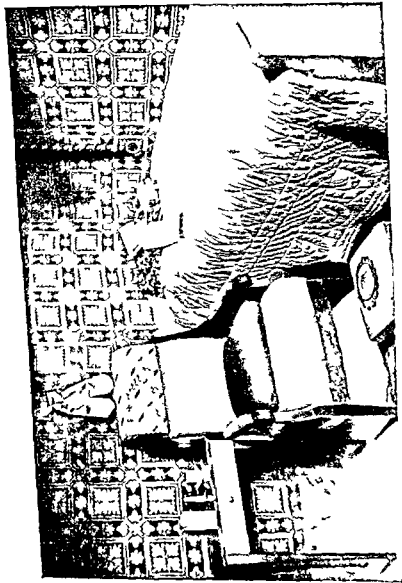
A good man in the direful grasp of ill
His consciousness of right retaineth still

These lines are taken from Goethe's prologue to the play, and the truth they express, though now and then obscured like the lustre of a revolving light, pervades the entire work. Faust consorts with the devil, but he nevertheless despises him. Stumble and sin as he may at the tempter's suggestion, he yet cannot become as he. He is always human, never fiendish. He works destruction

under the impulse of passion and desire, but on reflection he loathes his evil work. He cannot become a devil, because of that spark fallen from heaven into his soul which he calls conscience. He stoops to degradation, but he cannot lie down content in it. That at which Mephistopheles chuckles fills him with loathing and nameless horror. He drifts into evil, but it is not his native element. He has acted wrongfully, but the fangs of remorse strike deep and proclaim him human still. He has never said 'Evil, be thou my good' and so he is always capable of redemption. He stoops to vanity and slips into sensual mire, but, despite all this his inborn tendency is

To mount aloft to struggle still towards heaven

Such are some of the lessons which we learn from the study of the Faust legend as interpreted by Goethe. It represents with an eternal significance the conflict of human life with the tendencies which would drag it down to degradation and plunge it in despair. Goethe himself says 'The marionette fable of Faust murmured with many voices in my soul. I, too, had wandered into every department of knowledge and had returned early enough satisfied with the vanity of science. And life, too I had tried under various aspects, and always came back sorrowing and unsatisfied' Nay, the meaning of



GOETT'S BEDROOM WITH THE ARM CHAIR IN WHICH HE DIED

the legend goes deeper, than Goethe cared to acknowledge. It represents the inadequacy of the world and of its pursuits or pleasures to satisfy the soul which thirsts for God. Faust is restless and tormented because he seeks in the world satisfaction for a spirit coming from God and destined to be for ever athirst apart from God.

This soul hunger is well expressed by Mephistopheles where, addressing the Lord of all, he says, concerning his victim

As if no common human cheer
 Were good enough for him to sup,
 He strives to pour the far and near
 Into one deep devouring cup
 Would drink the stars in his career,
 And earth with all her pleasures up
 And yet—poor fool! for all he will
 'Tis vain—he cannot get his fill,
 He cannot make his heart be still

The whole story is but a pathetic commentary on those words of Holy Writ 'They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water'

Salient Features of 'Faust'

Faust opens with a prologue for the theatre in which the methods are discussed between the Manager, the Poet, and the Clown, as to how a

piece may be produced which will catch the popular taste. The Manager favours that which will attract and pay, the Clown that which will amuse the Poet that which will elevate. That is a fine touch in which the Manager suggests a broad canvas as essential to success. There must be a prodigal wealth in the play. It must be so rich and various that every spectator will find something which suits him.

A mass alone will with the mass succeed
Then each at length selects what he requires
Who bringeth much of many suits the need
And each contented from the house retires.

Here we have one of the secrets of the success of works like Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as well as his *Romeo and Juliet*. The wealth of production appeals to every beholder. Wit and pathos love and hate hope and despair, are all pressed into the service of the dramatist that he may suit the taste of all. In *Faust* we find the same rich commingling of varied elements.

The indignant reply of the Poet of whom the Manager demands that he shall stoop low enough to tickle the audience into laughter as well as rise high enough to quicken them into thought is worthy of quotation.

Depart! else where another servant choose!
What! shall the bard his godlike power abuse?

Man's loftiest right kind nature's high bequest
For your mean purpose basely sport away?
Whence comes his mastery o'er the human breast?
What bends the elements beneath his sway?
Oh is it not his own poetic soul,
Whose gushing harmony with strong control
Draws back into his heart the wondrous whole?
When round her spindle with unceasing drone
Nature still whirls th' unending thread of life
When Beings jarrèd crowds together thrown
Mingle in harsh inextricable strife,
Whose spirit quickens the unvarying round
And bids it flow to music's measured tone?
Who calls the individual to resound
With nature's chords in noble unison?
Who hears the voice of passion in the storm?
Who sees the flush of thought in evening's glow?
Who lingers fondly round the loved one's form
Sprung's fairest blossoms in her path to strow?
Who from unmeaning leaves a wreath doth twine
For glory gathered in whatever field?
Who raises mortals to the realms divine?—
Man's lofty spirit in the bard revealed

The prologue for the theatre is succeeded by a prologue in heaven. The celestial hosts come forward to praise the Lord. They sing of the mighty works of the Eternal King. Suddenly a harsh discord breaks in upon the music a jarring voice strikes through the melody. It is Goethe's devil, Mephistopheles who speaks. Not the devil whom Milton depicted who was 'nought less than Archangel ruined but the devil who debased by ages of delight in evil has become small virulent

and mean, a scoffer and a denier, a creature who always says 'No'

He reminds the Deity that while things may appear so favourable in heaven, on earth it is other wise, and human nature has turned out a miserable failure. Even in the presence of God he is flippant, and his only language is a sneer. Hear him

Since Lord thy levee thou again dost hold
To learn how all things are progressing here
Since thou hast kindly welcomed me of old
Thou see'st me now among thy suite appear
Excuse me fine harangues I cannot make
Though all the circle look on me with scorn
~~My pathos~~ ~~soar~~ thy laughter would awake
Hadst thou the laughing mood not long forsworn
Concerning suns and worlds I've nought to say
I but consider man's self torturing lot
As wondrous now as on creation's day
His stamp the little world god changeth not
A somewhat better life he'd lead poor wight,
But for thy gift a gleam of heavenly light,
Reason he calls it and doth use it so
That ~~even~~ ~~than~~ brutes more brutish he doth grow
He seems to me begging your graces pardon
Like one of those long legged things in a garden,
That fly about and hop and leap and spring
And in the grass the same old chirrup sing
Would I could say that here the story closes
But in each filthy mess they thrust their noses,

Thus speaks the mean devil whose only eloquence is a sneer, and whose ruling passion may be fitly expressed in the terrible utterance placed by

Milton in the mouth of the Satan of his great
Epic

Save what is in destroying other joy
To me is lost

After the manner suggested by the Book of Job, the devil is then asked if he knows Faust His reply is that he does and that he is a frenzied dreamer who has placed the world under tribute, and with all its treasures of knowledge at command is still unsatisfied He also adds that if he may only be permitted to tempt him, he can lure him down to degradation and darkness To this the Lord of All replies

Enough! it is permitted thee! D vert
This mortal spirit from his source divine
And canst thou se ze on him thy power exert
To draw him downward and to make him thine
Then stand abashed when baffled thou shalt own
A good man in the direful grasp of ill
H s consciousness of ight retaineth still

Faust at Easter tide

The progress of the fateful drama now conducts us into the presence of Faust He is in his study and his mood is one of despair Baffled in the pursuit of knowledge and disappointed in his search after happiness he meditates suicide that freed from his earthly environment he may mingle with the universe and know it by contact with its elements

He is turned away from his fell purpose however by the music of the bells of Easter-tide and by the singing of the choir which recalls those hours of early devotion when God seemed near and the mystic ladder linking earth with heaven had not yet melted away into thin air

This interlude of despairing madness with its pathetic close in which hope and memory snatch him from the jaws of death is thus depicted by the poet. With the goblet charged with poison in his hand the despairing thinker says

Let this last draught be the product of my skill
 My own free choice be quaffed with resolute will
 A solemn greeting to the coming day!
 (He places the goblet to his lips)
(The ringing of bells and choir voices)

Chorus of Angels

Christ's angel!
 Mortal all hail to thee
 Thou whom mortality
 Earth's sad reality
 Held as a prisoner

Faust

What harmonious vocal clear silvery chime
 Thus draws the goblet from my lips a way?
 Ye deep-toned bells do ye with voice sublime
 Announce the solemn dawn of Easter-day?
 Sweet choir are ye the hymn of comfort singing
 Which once around the darkness of the grave
 From seraph voices in glad triumph ring
 Of a new covenant assurance gave?

Chorus of Women

Embalmed with spices rare
 In sorrow and in gloom
 His faithful followers bare
 His body to the tomb
 For their sepulchral test
 We swathed the relikes dear
 Ah! vain is now our quest
 Christ is no longer here!

Chorus of Angels

Christ is arisen!
 Perfect through earthly ruth
 Radiant with love and truth
 Girt with eternal youth
 He soars from earth's prison

Faust

Wherefore ye tones celestial sweet and strong
 Come ye a dweller in the dust to seek?
 Ring out your chimes believing crowds among
 I hear the message but my faith is weak
 From faith her darling miracle hath sprung
 I dare not soar aloft to yonder spheres
 Whence so and the joyful tidings yet this strain
 I am! ar even from my boyhood's years
 Binds me to earth a with a mystic chain
 Then would celestial love with holy kiss,
 Come o'er me in the Sabbath's stilly hour
 While fraught with solemn and mysterious power
 Chimed the deep sounding bell and prayer was bliss
 A yearning impulse undefined yet dear
 Drove me to wander on through wood and field
 With leaving breast and many a burning tear
 I felt with holy joy a world revealed
 This Easter hymn announced with joyous pealing
 Gay sports and festive hours in times of old

And early memories fraught with child like feeling
 From death's dark threshold now my steps withhold
 O still sound on, thou sweet celestial strain
 Tears now are gushing—Earth, I'm thine again

Thus does Goethe bear witness to the great truth that God is and that He touches us. Not willing that His children should drift from Him into orphanage, 'He besets them behind and before and lays His hand upon them' 'He visits them every morning, and tries them every moment.' And if they will only respond to His touch—that touch which is the native endowment of the soul—He will fold them in the grand embrace of a love which knows no interval and no change.

It was the pride of intellect, the chafing at the boundaries which encompass the finite mind, which led Faust to abandon the pursuit of knowledge in petulant despair and seek in cruel and debasing animalism the pleasure which the quest of truth denied. Had he listened in meek humility to the song which the inner spirit sings, had he turned aside from his selfish pursuit of culture for its own sake, and for his own personal development and satisfaction, to those sacred depths of devout experience which fellowship with God inspires, his light would have been as that of the morning and his assurance as the noon day.

And that which is true of Faust is true—also

of Goethe, whose own personal history was so largely expressed in the history and experience of the hero of his fateful tragedy. With all his acquired wisdom he either missed or ignored the great truth that intellect does not constitute the whole man, but that manhood includes also a capacity for God and emotions and affinities answerable thereto and that only by the fitting culture of these highest powers of manhood, united with a glad response to the divine approach, can the soul find rest and satisfaction. Higher than intellect or learning, culture or genius is childlike humility, and childlike trust. 'The meek will He guide in judgement, and the meek will He teach His way

The Gay Dance of Life

We now quit the chamber of the student and mingle with the people who keep holiday. Students and girls, soldiers and shopkeepers move through the city gates a bright and joyous crowd

The multitudes in bright array
Stream forth and seek the sun's warm ray!
Their risen Lord they celebrate
For they themselves have also risen to-day!
From the mean tenement the sordid room
From manual craft from toils imperious sway
From roofs and gables overhanging gloom
From the close pressure of the narrow street

And from the churches venerable night
They've issued now from darkness into light

And hark! the sounds of village mirth arise
This is the people's genuine paradise
Both great and small send up a joyous cheer
Yes! I am still a man—I feel it here

Such is the glad exhilaration of the people as it appeals to Faust who is also human and realizes his kinship with them. While he is baffled and perplexed they are happy. The mysteries of existence vex them not. The great riddle of the unintelligible world has for them no meaning and imposes on them no burden. Their only care is to enjoy the moments as they fly. Well are they not after all wiser than he? What has his long quest after truth and knowledge brought him? Oh could he but renew his youth and love and live as they he might yet be happy. Here we have the key and kernel of the whole matter of the play. It represents the folly with which men be trayed by passion and desire sacrifice the future to the present. They do not pause and ask with Shakespeare

What vain I if I gain the thing I seek?

A dream a breath a froth of fleeting joy

Who buys a minutes mirth to va l a t e e k

Or sells etern ty to get a toy?

They do not consider this weighty problem but

without reflection throw reason and conscience overboard into the hungry gulf of passion. For the pleasure of a few moments they risk years of anguish and a bitterness of remorse which is as 'a worm which dieth not,' and a fire which is unquenchable

It is in this mood that the tempter finds the baffled student, and makes him an easy prey. He longs for fuller life, for the keen zest of youth, for thrilling pulses and present delights. If ever he can be induced to say to the passing moment, 'Stay, thou art so fair!' he is willing to barter his soul to the devil. Mephistopheles accepts the wager, and begins his work as tempter and destroyer. His instruments of seduction are the two baits which have lured men to ruin in all ages—wine and women. The first bait, however, fails. Auerbach's cellar, with its fumes of bad wine and stale tobacco, is too gross a lure to attract a man like Faust. The next expedient must, therefore, be tried. Not to be won by wine, he shall be bewitched by beauty.

Faust and Margaret

Faust finds his Helen in the innocent and hapless Margaret. He first sees her as she is returning from church with that strange and beautiful light

/

in her eyes which is born of the sanctities of prayer
 How entrancing is the image of Margaret, in her
 innocence, her simplicity, and her natural charm
 and sweetness ! How simple and true to life is her
 girlish prattle to Faust, as she walks arm in arm
 with him in the garden !

We have no maid I do the knitting sewing sweeping
 The cooking early work and late in fact
 And mother in her notions of house keeping
 Is so exact !
 Not that she needs much to keep expenses down
 We more than others might take comfort rather
 A nice estate was left us by my father
 A house a little garden near the town
 But now my days have less of noise and hurry,
 My brother is a soldier
 My little sister's dead
 True, with the child a troubled life I led
 Yet would I take again, and willing all the worry
 So very dear was she

Her heart is soon lost With the whole intensity
 of her simple nature she loves Faust and is ready
 to give up all for his sake She is entirely in
 his power love having taken complete possession
 of her and under the baleful influence of the tempter
 strengthened by his own ardent passion Faust
 destroys her It is a cruel story and we shudder
 at the horror of it but the might of creative genius
 is revealed on every page The girl's instinctive
 terror in the presence of Mephistopheles is finely
 depicted and she describes him in a few words

You see that he with no soul sympathizes,
'Tis written on his face he never loved
Whenever he comes near I cannot pray

The anxiety of Margaret about her lover's faith is also very beautiful, and that is a wonderful reply he gives to her question as to whether he believes in God

Margaret

How is it with relig ion in your mind?
You are, tis true, a good kind hearted man
But I'm afraid not piously incl ned

Faust

Forbear! I love you darling you alone!
For those I love my life I would lay down
And none would of their faith or church bereave

Margaret

That's not enough we must ourselves believe

Faust

Faust

My love forbear!
 Who dares acknowledge I in God believe?
 Ask priest or sage the answer you receive
 Seems but a mockery of the questioner

Margaret

Then you do not believe?

Faust

Sweet one my meaning do not misconceive!
 Him who dare name
 And yet proclaim
 Yes, I believe?
 Who that can feel
 His heart can steel
 To say I disbelieve?
 The All-embracer
 All sustainer
 Doth He not embrace sustain
 Thee me Himself?
 Lifts not the Heaven its dome above?
 Doth not the firm-set earth beneath us lie
 And beaming tenderly with looks of love
 Climb not the everlasting stars on high?
 Are we not gazing in each others eyes?
 Nature's impenetrable agencies
 Are they not thronging on thy heart and brain
 Viewless or visible to mortal ken
 Around thee weaving their mysterious reign?
 Fill thence thy heart how large soe'er it be
 And in the feeling when thou art wholly blest
 Then call it what thou wilt—Bliss! Heart! Love! God!
 I have no name for it—its feeling all
 Name is but sound and smoke
 Shrouding the glow of heaven

Margaret

All this is doubtless beautiful and true
The priest doth also much the same declare
Only in somewhat different language too

Faust

Beneath Heaven's genial sunshine everywhere
This is the utterance of the human heart,
Each in his language doth the like impart,
Then why not I in mine?

Margaret

What thus I hear
Sounds plausible yet I'm not reconcled
There's something wrong about it much I fear
That thou art not a Christian

The idea of God presented in this passage expresses what may be termed the poetic pantheism of Goethe. He could not think of a God who only gave an impulse from without, whirling the universe round His finger and 'seeing it go' as something utterly alien from Himself untouched, unguided, and forsaken. To him the universe was animated with God, it lived and moved and had its being in Him. There is also a dim and reverent vastness in the reply which receives further explanation from that conversation with Eckermann in which Goethe complained of those who treated God as if the most inconceivable, sublimest of Beings was their equal 'Otherwise they would not say, "the Lord God,"

' the dear Lord the good God He becomes to them especially to the priests who have Him daily in their mouth a phrase a mere name. If they were duly impressed by His greatness they would be mute and refrain from naming Him out of reverence

We pass with a shudder over the details of the ruin and despair of the innocent Margaret. The woe which drives her to madness when she learns that through the vile devilry of Mephistopheles she has been the unconscious agent of the death of her mother her brother and her child is too pitiful to dwell upon. Let it suffice to say that in the last scene of the play she chooses death at the hand of the executioner rather than life given by the fiend. And when at her final refusal Mephistopheles proclaims that she is judged a mightier Voice coming from heaven announces that she is saved. Here the action terminates and Faust and his tempter vanish from our sight as if taken by the darkness

The Second Part of Faust

It must frankly be admitted that the second part of *Faust* is inferior to the first. We trace in it the faltering purpose the clouded vision and the feeble hand of age. All students of the poet

and his work are more or less baffled as they attempt to estimate its value and to explain its purpose.

Yet, coming from such a mind as Goethe's, and partly written, and entirely planned, before the publication of the first part, it must have a consistent purpose if we can only spell it out. There must be some harmony between the two creations which was present to the mind of their creator, though it may, to the general reader, be cloudy and obscure. There must be precious gold in the rock if we can only separate it from its allegoric matrix. It cannot as many have affirmed, be a mere classic phantasmagoria utterly undecipherable.

What then is the meaning of the second part of *Faust*? Personally we are impressed by the conviction that it represents Goethe's way of salvation for Faust from the sin and shame which render the first part so sad a revelation of appalling profligacy and hideous selfishness. In the first part we see how Faust is made the prey of Mephistopheles, in the second we see how he is extricated from his toils. In the first part Faust is wrecked by self-indulgence in the second he is redeemed by self-denial. In the first part he brings unutterable misery on others by his unrestrained and selfish passion, in the second he

confers happiness on others by unselfish and loving service The cry of the first part is

Give me the agitated strife
The madness of the world of life

In other words let passion drink her fill and desire attain its object whatever the consequences involved

The cry of the second part is

Thou shalt abstain—renounce—refrain!
Such is the everlasting song
That in the ears of all men rings—
That unrelieved our whole life long
Each hour in passing hoarsely sings

Amid much which is confusing and unintelligible these convictions find clear expression in the concluding pages of the great *Faust* drama We see in the baffled scholar and in the ardent lover two mighty powers at work—the one good and the other evil the one ennobling and the other debasing But the close of the drama shows that this struggle is not eternal, that in a spirit which in spite of fall and failure still struggles bravely upwards the good ultimately triumphs and the evil is beaten down and vanquished In the first part of the drama we have the idea of Faust enslaved in the second though more feebly handled

because of the failing power of the author, we have the idea of Faust delivered

It is in heathenish and not in Christian fashion that this deliverance is wrought out, for Goethe has broken away so utterly from the Christian conceptions of repentance, forgiveness, and salvation through Christ that the description of him as the great heathen is no mere epithet thrown at him by his adversaries. Heathenish though it be, however, it is yet profoundly significant as indicating what the new paganism, the modern Renaissance the religion of culture of which Goethe was the herald has to offer us for the uplifting of humanity. Briefly stated the instruments of Faust's emancipation are, first, the healing balm of nature, second the service of the State as the minister and guardian of social order, third the influence of beauty as a refining and elevating force, fourth the power of honest work as a refuge from pessimism and discontent, and fifth the service of humanity as an antidote to selfishness.

The first agent for Faust's uplifting is the tender ministry of nature. The drama opens with Faust stretched on the flowery turf, anxious to calm his restlessness in sleep. It is twilight, and celestial spirits hover round him in the air. Ariel, to the accompaniment of Aeolian harps, chants a soothing melody, bidding the beneficent powers of nature

minister to the worn and remorseful man She
sings

The fierce convulsions of his heart compose,
Remove the burning barbs of his remorse
And cleanse his being from his suffered woes

Sleep now intervenes beneath the night in her
silence and the stars in their calm Nature hushes,
like a mother, her tired child to slumber Anon
day bursts on the world with a crash which
shatters night's portals and Faust, calmed and
refreshed, awakes to the beauty of the world in
the glad season of spring Thrilled by the vision
of the waking world he cries

Life's pulses now with new fed force awaken
To greet the mild ethereal twilight o'er me
Night from thy brow O Earth its pall hath taken
And now thou breathest new refreshed before me
And now thou movest of thy gladness granting
A gracious resolution to restore me
To that d v n e r life for which I'm panting

Service for the State

The scene now changes and Faust is ushered
into a bright, crowded world where a thousand
interests engage his attention, and deliver him
from morbid brooding on himself and his deficiencies.
He appears in company with Mephistopheles in
the court of the German Emperor The kingdom
is in a condition of poverty, anarchy, and ruin,

The nobles are discontented the laws are disregarded the army is on the verge of revolt, and the exchequer is empty

Assisted by the demonic power of Mephistopheles Faust sets himself for the cure of these evils A new financial system is introduced which saves the State from bankruptcy the foreign mercenaries receive the pay for which they are clamouring law and justice are restored for the protection of the innocent and the punishment of the guilty order springs from chaos and content checks the progress of revolution The counsel given to the Emperor is

First self-command must quiet and assure us
 The higher things the lower will procure us
 Who seeks for Good must first be good
 Who seeks for joy must moderate his blood
 ✓ Who when he desires let him the vintage tread
 Who miracles by stronger faith be led!

The final result of the strenuous service of Faust is that by his labours for the State the life for self is dwarfed and stunted and the life for others enlarged

The Ministry of Beauty

The second and third acts of the drama deal with the power of beauty to elevate the soul Goethe believed and taught that the contemplation of the beautiful as the natural ally of the good was

ennobling and even regenerative. He also believed that a beautiful woman was God's loveliest and most attractive piece of workmanship. In harmony with this belief Helen of Troy is called up from the under world to fascinate men by her loveliness and redeem them from baseness. The power exercised by the full rich beauty, the stately grace and the resistless charm of Helen is expressed by the poet in many a fervid line and by many a forceful incident. For example in one place Lynceus the Warder of the Tower is represented as on the watch to give warning of all comers when Helen attracts his enraptured vision and so entrances him that he neglects to give notice of her arrival. When rebuked for his neglect his only excuse is the silencing spell of her beauty and he cries

Let me kneel and let me view her
 Let me live or let me die
 Slave to this high woman truer
 Than a bodysman born am I

Eye and heart I must surrender
 Drowned as in the radiant sea
 That high creature with her splendour
 Blinding all hath blinded me

I forgot the warders duty
 Trumpet challenge word of call
 Chide me threaten sure this Beauty
 Still thy anger saves thy thrall

Over wealth and blood and breath
 Thine proud beauty governeth
 Lo! thy warrior tings are tame
 All the swords are blunt and lame
 Near the bright form we bel old
 Even the sun is pale and cold
 Near the riches of her face
 All things empty shorn of grace

Neither is Faust himself less fascinated by the spell of Helen's beauty transporting him as it does into the old Greek world where through the marble statue shone the lovely soul and beauty walked hand in hand with sanctity and truth. Her beauty's light is on him like the dawn he kisses the hand which raises him to her side as co regent of the realm whose borders are unknown and seated there he cries

Thus I all success my fate and thine attended
 Henceforth behind us let the past be furled!
 O feel thyself from highest God descended!
 For thou belongest to the primal world

This spell of beauty rebuking in the imagination of the poet the vulgarity and ugliness of vice is another of the steps by which Faust is raised to a nobler activity and a worthier life

Service for Humanity

The next act of the drama is taken up by war which despite its cruelty and bloodshed is regarded

by the poet as a school of morals and an ethical force. The soldier dies for others. He surrenders his life for his country.

But it is the duty of the true man to live for others and the rest of the drama is devoted to service for the human race. From individual effort in the form of self culture and individual gratification in the form of vicious self indulgence the poet at last unveils the vital truth that man lives for man and that only in as far as he is working for humanity can his efforts bring permanent happiness.

For his devotion to the interests of the State Faust receives from the Emperor the sea shore in fief for ever. This privilege he consecrates to the noblest ends. By the power of science as the handmaid of civilization and through the beneficence of an almost sleepless industry he bars the barren and hungry sea from a large track of submerged land thus converting it into a refuge and a home for starving thousands of the common people. He thus becomes no longer a destroyer but a creator and restorer. He no longer makes of the lowly a scorn and a prey but stands forth as their helper and deliverer. He has created free and happy homes for coming generations of men who shall rise up to bless his beneficent activity and as in his old age he sees the flocks

and herds the peace and the sustenance, which as the result of his labours enrich and bless many a meagre and toil worn existence he cries to the passing moment Ah still delay—thou art so fair These words uttered he sinks on the earth dead and his soul escapes from the toils of the evil one and is carried by rejoicing angels into the Paradise of God In vain do the emissaries of Mephistopheles attempt to seize the immortal part of him they are beaten back by celestial guardians who sing as he mounts enfranchised from their thrall

The noble spirit now is free
 And saved from evil scheming
 Whoe'er aspires unweariedly
 Is not beyond redeeming
 And if he feels the grace of love
 That from on high is given
 The Blessed Hosts that wait above
 Shall welcome him to heaven

Here we revert to the truth expressed by the poet in the Prologue in Heaven with which the first part of his drama opens

A good man in the dreadful grasp of ill
 His consciousness of right retains still

Fettered and clouded by evil let him still struggle and aspire and he will yet enter into light and stand among the conquerors That such was Goethe's purpose we learn from the fact that on

one occasion he compared the 'Prologue in Heaven' to the overture of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, in which a lovely musical phrase occurs which is not repeated until the *finale*

Such disentangled from its shrouding veils of allegory and its occult philosophy and bewildering symbolism, is the final lesson of Goethe's Faust. A moment does come to Faust when he can say to life 'O stay—thou art so fair' But it is not in a moment of self-indulgence he says this it is in a moment of self-sacrifice. The joy he would fain arrest in his final hour is not the joy which springs from selfish and depraved passion when it has seized its prey, it is the joy springing from wise and disinterested labour in the service of humanity. To make self the end of life and selfish joy the supreme object of existence as Faust had done resulted for him in entanglement and misery and remorse to sacrifice self to the higher law of duty, to serve in the spirit of love and brotherhood this was victory, and peace and joy. Thus Goethe, with all his hoarded wisdom bought so dearly only reaches at last the sublime truth which seemed to fall from the lips of Him who uttered it as lightly as the flower from the hand of the child. He that saveth his life shall lose it but he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it.'

The last scene in Faust is one of deep and beautiful significance. It is a scene in heaven where the faithful Margaret, who loves him still, and whose own bliss cannot be perfected until he is saved, appears, like Beatrice in Dante's Paradise, to act as the spiritual guide of her redeemed and restored lover. She represents, according to Goethe, the glory of *the eternal feminine*, the beauty of unselfish and forgiving womanhood, the loveliest vision which earth can present for the study of the Universe, the highest possible development of the human soul. Love that forgives all wrong in the beloved, that forgets all injury. Love that cannot be blest, or content, or feel itself truly saved, unless the loved one shares its blessedness and participates in its bliss. This is the last grand lesson of the mystic drama, expressed in its last words :

The woman-soul leadeth us
Upward and on

The Wisdom of Goethe

Dealing in this sketch with Goethe as a poet, rather than as a critic and a thinker, we cannot adequately dwell on that profound wisdom—the combined result of genius, insight, and industry—in which some find his most enduring title to fame. Certain it is that the world has seen no critic so

great, and no thinker who looked more deeply into the heart of things He himself says in *Faust*

The voice of Wisdom utters lofty truth,
While madness from a wild harmonious lute,
Scatters forth bursts of fitful harmony

This great German excels, as a poet, because, like the greatest poets, he is also a profound thinker He is not only a poet, but a philosopher The singer waits upon the sage, and utters 'lofty truth,' and not mere 'bursts of fitful harmony' To passion and music are added large ideas and abundant knowledge He is no mere dreamer, but is firmly rooted on the earth as he spreads widely his radiant pinions and mounts freely to the sky The praise of Matthew Arnold is not misplaced where he says

He took the suffering human race
He read each wound each weakness clear,
And struck his finger on the place
And said Thou ailest here and here!

The profound wisdom of Goethe as thinker and philosopher, as well as poet, might be illustrated by a hundred luminous maxims and passages from his works. Our space, however, only permits that we should append the following

Present and Future
Nothing may perish
Beneath the sky

We are here for a day,
To stamp on the clay
A part of ourselves
That may never die.

Life and Work

Ask not by what gate thou camest
Into life the garden of God,
But in the quiet nook assigned thee
Trim the beds and break the clod!

To the Artist

Artist let thy words be few
To thy shaping tool be true,
And work thy soul from day to day,
Like breath into the yielding clay

Rule of Life

Wouldst thou be a happy liver
Let the past be past for ever!
Fret not when prigs and pedants bore you,
Enjoy the good that's set before you,
But chiefly hate no man the rest
Leave them to God, who knows what's best

Wise Repentance

If it be noble in our hearts to keep
The memory of our faults and weigh them well
And in their room plant virtues nevermore
Can it be right and praiseful with long fret
For past misdeeds to undermine the heart,
And lame the springs of action

Turning from poetry to prose we add the following profound reflections on life and its deeper meanings

Doubt of any kind can be removed by nothing but action

I will listen to any ones convictions but pray keep your doubts to yourself I have plenty of my own

Ingratitude is a sign of weakness I never knew a strong character ungrateful

The world cannot do without great men but great men are very troublesome to the world

Men of profound thoughts and earnest minds are at a great disadvantage with the public.

Nobody they say is a hero to his valet Of course, for a man must be a hero to understand a hero

The ancients were eminently fertile in productions we are great in destruction and criticism

What is the best government? That which teaches self government

The company of chaste women is the proper atmosphere of good manners

The immorality of the age is a standing topic of complaint with some men But if any one likes to be moral I can see nothing in the age to prevent him

Time is a great curse to those who believe they are born to kill it

The greatest men whom I have known—men whose glance embraced the heavens and the earth—were very humble and aware of the manner in which they had risen to such eminence

Hold fast by the present Every situation—nay every moment—is of infinite value for it is the representative of a whole eternity

The Theatre has often been at variance with the Pulpit, they ought not I think to quarrel How much it is to be wished that in both the celebration of Nature and of God were entrusted to none but men of noble minds

Christianity

Let intellectual and spiritual culture progress and the human mind expand as much as it will beyond the grandeur and

moral elevation of Christianity, as it shines in the Gospels, the human mind will not advance.

Love and Knowledge

We learn to know nothing but what we love, and the deeper we mean to penetrate into any matter with insight, the stronger and more vital must our love and passion be

The Mystery of Existence

Man is born not to solve the problem of the universe, but to find out where the problem begins and then to restrain himself within the limits of the comprehensible

God and His Creation

After all, what does it all come to? God did not retire to rest after the well known six days of creation, but on the contrary, is constantly active as on the first. It would have been for Him a poor occupation to compose this heavy world out of simple elements and to keep it rolling in the sunbeams from year to year if He had not the plan of founding a nursery for a world of spirits upon this material basis. So He is now constantly active in higher natures to attract the lower ones

Thus convinced of a future for the aspiring and advancing spirit Goethe faced the phantom which we call death. His last years were chastened by many sorrows sorrows which all his wisdom and foresight could not evade and for which his philosophy could furnish no anodyne sorrows which might well have chastened into meekness the spirit of one aptly described by R. H. Hutton as the wisest man of modern days who ever lacked the wisdom of a child the deepest who never knew what it was to kneel in the dust with bowed head and broken heart. The most important achievement of his old age was the completion of the second part of *Faust*. He finished it before his last birthday in his eighty second year and told Eckermann his secretary that his task being done he would regard the rest of his life as a pure gift. In the following year he passed away the last audible words from his lips as the shadow of death fell on him being More light! More light!

VICTOR HUGO

Victor in Drama Victor in Romance,
Cloud weaver of phantasmal hopes and fears,
French of the French and lord of human tears,
Child lover bard whose fame lit laurels glance
Darkening the wreaths of all that would advance,
Beyond our strait, the claim to be thy peers
~ TENNYSON

IN these lines we have a just and fitting tribute paid by the greatest poetic artist of the nineteenth century to its greatest creative genius. Generous, fervid, mighty, sympathetic, by dint of brilliant creative power, and an imagination which soared sunward like an eagle, Victor Hugo throned himself above all the literary masters of his time. He is sometimes coarse, he is frequently extravagant, his work is too often steeped in his own remarkable personality, the theatrical element mingling its alloy with the fine gold of his genius, ever and anon betrays him into unreality, but when all this is said and admitted, it must still be allowed that he stands with Aeschylus, Shakespeare and Goethe among the writers of the

world In our judgement—while fully mindful of the mastery of Corneille, Racine, and Balzac—he is the greatest literary personage France has ever produced

Like some other of the world's greatest poets, he owed much to the intense national life of his period Aeschylus fought in that army of Greece which drove the Persian hosts into the swamps of Marathon, Shakespeare shared in the splendid energy of that Elizabethan England which conquered the Spanish Armada, and Victor Hugo stood in the glow and passion of the contending forces which had created Republican France He was essentially a people's poet, a great patriotic singer, who gave through his noble grandiose magniloquence magnificent utterance to the aspirations and achievements of his time

Neither was the voice of Victor Hugo merely a trumpet voice commissioned to rouse a nation out of sleep and lead it on to liberty It was an organ voice, embracing in its varied sweep the whole range of human feeling and human passion Love and hate pity and revenge, crime and innocence remorse and rapture cruel selfishness and divinest charity, the charm of external nature and the mystery and majesty of man—all these have been voiced by this mighty master, in epic, drama fiction, satire ode and song and urged home with that

passionate enthusiasm which is one of the finest attributes of supreme genius His Pegasus as his own verses testify, was too fiery and energetic to move at ease in the narrow limits prescribed by the pedant and the classicist Proud minion of the skies, it demanded a wider area for its path and progress

A horse of a glorious lineage
 Astarte like born of the foam
 Daily fed from Aurora's bright chalice
 Brought straight from her own starry home
 A steed mighty and grand in his movements
 Untamable bounding on high
 Ever filling with resonant neighings
 The vault of the deep azure sky

God created the gulf for his pleasure
 And gave the wild skies to his will
 His flight in the gloom and the shadow
 His path through the lightning-cleft hill
 Through the dense mists of heaven he wanders
 And loves as he moves on his way,
 To fly till the thick murky darkness
 Shrinks back from the presence of day
 And the fierce glaring look of his eyeballs
 Brought back from his mystic career
 He fixes on man that bare atom
 And fills him with terror and fear
 Strong not docile he's hard to be guided
 As many a poet will find
 Who may use him to leap over a chasm
 Which cannot be bridged by the mind.

Poet, dramatist, novelist, historian philosopher, orator, and patriot, Victor Hugo was above all things a poet, and it is in this capacity that we shall consider him in the following pages, blending, as far as it appears necessary, the story of his active life with the results of his transcendent genius

Birth and Early History

If a life of thrilling incident and stormy movement, and experience varied and changeable as the cloud pageantry of a day of storm, are a stimulus to genius and an aid to its development, Victor Hugo was in this respect extremely fortunate. It may be truly said that human life holds nothing in its wallet which he did not taste—no smatch of wormwood no delight of love no salt of tears, no rapture of success. In his long and eventful career he exhausted the gamut of human experience, and went forth in death from a world bankrupt as far as its power was concerned to offer him a new sensation.

He was born at Besançon in the extreme east of France, on February 26 1802. His infant life was so fragile and delicate that all despaired of him except his mother. His father was an officer in the Army of the French Republic, and became

an ardent Napoleonist. His mother, on the other hand, was by birth and sentiment a Royalist. Thus, from his very childhood, the poet was exposed to two utterly opposite influences. His early years were years of wandering, for Napoleon was then advancing through Europe in his might as a conqueror, and the child followed with his father and mother the steps of that dark archangel of war. From Besançon to Marseilles, from Marseilles to Elba, from Elba to Paris, from Paris to Avellians, where he played at the foot of Vesuvius, thence to Spain, and finally to Paris again—he was perpetually on the move. In one of his earlier odes he tells us that his cradle had often rested on a drum, that water from the brook was brought to his childish lips in a soldier's helmet, and the tatters of some worn out battle flag had been wrapped round him in his sleep. It is not difficult to realize how the imagination of the ardent boy was tinctured by these scenes of his early life. It is memories and experiences such as these which throb in the following lines, written in after years, on 'The Grand Army'

Soldiers of our Year Two! O wars! O epic songs!—
Drawing at once their swords against all Crowned Wrongs
In Prussian Austrian bounds
And against all the Tyres and Sodoms of the earth,
And him the man hunter, the Tzar o' the icy North,
Followed by all his hounds.

And against Europe all with all its captains proud
 With all its foot-soldiers whose might the plains did crowd
 With all its horsemen fleet,
 All risen against France with many a hydra head—
 They sang as on they marched their spirits without dread
 And without shoes their feet

The vanguard they o'errame the centre they o'erthrew,
 In the snow and in the rain water their middles to
 On went they ever on
 And one sued them for peace, and one flung wide his gate,
 And thrones were scattered like dead leaves, here of late,
 Now at the winds breath gone

O soldiers! you were grand in the midst of battle-shocks,
 With your lightning flashing eyes and wild dishevelled locks
 In the wild whirlwind black,
 Impetuous ardent radiant tossing back your heads
 Like lions snuffing up the North wind when he treads
 Upon his tempest track!

In the year 1812 the daring chivalry of the
 'Grand Army' was rudely checked in Spain by
 the prowess of British troops, under the command
 of Wellington. During the next two years this
 disaster was followed by the melting away of a
 mighty host of helpless valour into the snows of
 Russia, and by the culminating catastrophe at
 Waterloo.

After the fall of the Empire, General Hugo and
 his wife were separated, and Victor was destined by
 his father for the Ecole Polytechnique and military
 life. But the tastes of the future king of men were

classical in style, and breathing the Royalist and religious spirit which he had received from his mother. These Odes attracted the attention of Louis XVIII who gave the poet a pension of one thousand francs from his privy purse. This gift was most opportune, since it not only snatched the poet from the chill embrace of penury, but also enabled him to marry Mdlle. Adele Foucher the daughter of a colleague of Colonel Hugos in the War Office. The pair had been playmates from their childhood and the story of their love and fealty is altogether beautiful recording how in early youth the ardent boy had centred his affections on Adele resolving as Tennyson expresses it

To love one maiden only cleave to her
And worship her by years of noble deeds
Until he won her

In 1826 our author published a second volume of *Odes and Ballads*. These manifest a fuller mastery of word music than the first and also betray an inward revolution in political opinion.

We append a few lines from this volume in Henry Carrington's translation on the fall of the first Napoleon.

The conqueror is depicted as treading with lonely step and sullen brow the sands of St Helena. As he moves onward in despairing wrath the great

sea finds a voice which is the cry of Nations for
revenge upon the merciless demon of War

The poet here strikes in with the terrible lines .

Shame, hate, misfortune, vengeance curses sore,

On him let heaven and earth together pour,

Now, see we dashed the vast Colossus low,

May he for ever rue alive and dead

All tears he caused mankind to shed

And all the blood he caused to flow

May at his name the Volga Tiber Seine,

Alhambra's walls, the ditch that girds Vincennes,

Taffa the Kremlin burnt without remorse

Carnage and conquest from their fields exclaim

(In thunder echoing back his fatal fame)

'Him do the slaughtered nations curse'

Around him may he see his victims press,

And crowd on crowds escaped from the dark abyss

Countless describe the secrets of the tomb,

Mangled and maimed by gun and sabre stroke

Hurling their bones all black with powderous smoke,

Make a foul Hinnom of his prison home

Let him live! dying every day and hour

His tear stained eyes let the proud victor lower,

His right deposed, e'en his renown scarce known,

His gaolers with their icy fetters weigh

That hand grown weary many a day

With dragging Kings from off their throne

His conquering fate he thought would leave behind

The memory of the race that ruled mankind,

God came and quenched a flambeau with His breath

And to eternal Rome's mock rival leaves

Only the time the space each man receives

To fill the narrow room of death

The next volume of poems from the pen of Victor Hugo was his *Orientales* published in 1829. Fantastic, savage, passionate like the Eastern life which they mirrored, these poems took the critics by storm. Not unfrequently, in the swing of their 'bewitching' music they remind us of our own Shelley while at the same time they display a poetic art as perfect as that of Keats or Tennyson. It is without question that as a pure lyricist Victor Hugo ranks with the foremost poets of the world.

Dramatic Poetry

A striking feature in the genius of Victor Hugo is its many-sidedness. There is no form of literature which he has not attempted and in which he has not excelled. Nor is it wonderful that, delighting as he did in the study of human life, its love, its energy, its terror, and its passion, he should seek for it that dramatic expression in which it moves and breathes before us. With Shakespeare, in whose footsteps he essayed to tread, we cannot compare him. That name stands alone. There is a sanity, a clearness, a universality, a separateness of the work from its creator about Shakespeare which leaves even a Titan such as Victor Hugo far behind. Yet nevertheless the dramatic creations of this greatest son of France are fraught with a

pathos and a tenderness which even Shakespeare has not surpassed, while they are wedded to a verse whose passion and music will render them immortal. They breathe a soul of poetry which laughs at death, while, at the same time, to quote the words of an admiring critic, they 'clothe again the haughtiness of honour, the loyalty of grief, the sanctity of indignation, in words that shine like lightning and verses that thunder like the sea.' In these plays, also, our author emancipated the tragic stage of France from the fetters in which it had been bound by the classicists for two hundred years. Influenced by his knowledge of the work of Calderon and his Spanish associates, and by his study of Shakespeare, he became the founder of the romantic school of French dramatists. The supreme law of the classical school was 'The idea shall be beautiful and the expressions shall be polished—literature is a mirror of good society.' Against this dictum Victor Hugo claimed that the idea should be true and the expression natural—literature is a mirror of nature. On this law he built up those splendid creations, *Hernani*, *Marion de l'Orme*, *Le Roi s'Amuse*, and *Ruy Blas*, with others, in which his success was less marked than in these

Our chief objection to the plays of Victor Hugo is their unspeakable sadness. Like his colossal creations in fiction, they depress us with the dis-

couragement of gloom. Our climate and national temperament demand something brighter than French fiction offers to a people who can tolerate an amount of unmerited misery which to us who take life so much more seriously, is absolutely crushing darkening the sun at noon and charging the night with terror

The King's Amusement

One of the most notable of Victor Hugo's dramas is that entitled *Le Roi s'Amuse*, or *The King's Amusement*. On its first production it was represented only for one night, being suppressed by the Minister of the Interior because the author had selected for his villain no less a person than François I the glory of the Valois line. The second performance of the play did not take place until fifty years after and its run was short. It

marvels of dramatic literature Triboulet is a widower, who thus describes the wife who, for a few brief years, shared his fortunes

A woman different from all womankind
 Who knew me poor deserted sick deformed
 Yet loved me even for my wretchedness
 Dying she carried to the silent tomb
 The blessed secret of her sainted love,
 Love fleetest brighter than the lightning's flash,
 A ray from Paradise illuming Hell.
 O earth press lightly on that angel breast
 Where only did my sorrow find repose

The love of Triboulet for his lost wife is now concentrated on his daughter a maiden of surpassing beauty and the darling of his life

That is a pathetic passage in which the jester of the scornful spirit and the bitter tongue escaping from the hollow pageant of the court and hungering for love returns to his home and to his child who is kept in seclusion to save her from the shameless profligacy of the period. She embraces him as he enters the door, and when they are seated together he thus declares his deep affection for his cherished treasure (the translation is by Frederick L. Slous)

What heart in all the world responds like thine?
 I love thee as I hate all else beside.
 Sit thee down by me. Come we'll talk of this
 Art sure thou lovest me? No v that we are here
 Together and thy hand is clasped in mine
 Why should we speak of anything but thee?

The only joy that heaven vouchsafes my child!
 Others have parents, brothers loving friends
 Wives, husbands vassals a long pedigree
 Of ancestors and children numerous—
 But I have only thee! Some men are rich,
 Thou art my only treasure Blanche! my all!
 Some trust in Heaven I trust alone in thee
 What care I now for youth or woman's love
 For pomp or grandeur dignities or wealth?
 These are brave things but thou outweighst them all
 Thou art my country city family—
 My riches happiness religion hope—
 My universe I find them all in thee.
 From all but thee my soul shrinks trembling back
 Oh if I lost thee! The distracting thought
 Would kill me if it lived one instant more!
 Smile on me Blanche! thy pretty artless smile
 So like thy mother's she was artless too—
 You press your hand upon your brow my child
 Just as she did My soul leaps forth to thine
 Even in darkness—I can see thee still—
 For thou art day and light and life to me

Hernani

The forced and unnatural dramatic system followed by Racine and his imitators our author as the leader of the romantic revolt first attacked in a drama entitled *Cromwell* but it was the first performance of *Hernani* which set the rival schools in conflict and stirred literary Paris to its depths. This performance was a scene of riotous confusion roused by the indignation of the old and the enthusiasm of the new party The Academy

went so far as to lay a complaint against the innovation before Charles X, but he sensibly replied that he could not interfere, inasmuch as 'in matters of art he was no more than a private person'

The dramatic and poetic quality of *Hernani* is of the first order. *Hernani* is a rebel and an outcast, yet noble and as a lion amongst men. It is his determination to avenge his father's wrongs which has made him a bandit. Doña Sol is gentle and lovely as Juliet, and her devotion to *Hernani*, despite his position of peril and comparative degradation is a wonderful and affecting study. The interviews between the lovers are depicted with a master hand. We append a few passages from this play in the translation of Mrs Newton Crosland. The following is from the first act, and tells how *Hernani* issues from a night of storm into the chamber of his beloved one.

Doña Sol (touching his clothes)
Oh! Heavens! your cloak is drenched!
The rain must pour!

Hernani I know not

Doña Sol And the cold—
You must be cold!

Hernani I feel it not

Doña Sol Take off
This cloak, then pray

Hernani Doña beloved tell me
When night brings happy sleep to you so pure
And innocent—sleep that half opes your mouth

The only joy that heaven vouchsafes my child!
 Others have parents brothers loving friends
 Wives husbands vassals a long pedigree
 Of ancestors and children numerous—
 But I have only thee! Some men are rich
 Thou art my only treasure Blanche! my all!
 Some trust in Heaven I trust alone in thee
 What care I now for youth or woman's love
 For pomp or grandeur d'guities or wealth?
 These are brave things but thou outweigh'st them all
 Thou art my country city family—
 My riches happiness religion hope—
 My universe I find them all in thee
 From all but thee my soul shrinks trembling back
 Oh if I lost thee! The distracting thought
 Would kill me if it lived one instant more!
 Smile on me Blanche! thy pretty artless smile
 So like thy mother's she was artless too—
 You press your hand upon your brow my child
 Just as she did My soul leaps forth to thine
 Even in darkness—I can see thee still—
 For thou art day and light and life to me

Hernani

The forced and unnatural dramatic system followed by Racine and his imitators our author, as the leader of the romantic revolt first attacked in a drama entitled *Cromwell* but it was the first performance of *Hernani* which set the rival schools in conflict and stirred literary Paris to its depths. This performance was a scene of riotous confusion roused by the indignation of the old and the enthusiasm of the new party. The Academy

went so far as to lay a complaint against the innovation before Charles X, but he sensibly replied that he could not interfere, inasmuch as 'in matters of art he was no more than a private person'

The dramatic and poetic quality of *Hernani* is of the first order. *Hernani* is a rebel and an outcast, yet noble and as a lion amongst men. It is his determination to avenge his father's wrongs which has made him a bandit. Doña Sol is gentle and lovely as Juliet, and her devotion to *Hernani* despite his position of peril and comparative degradation is a wonderful and affecting study. The interviews between the lovers are depicted with a master hand. We append a few passages from this play in the translation of Mrs Newton Crosland. The following is from the first act, and tells how *Hernani* issues from a night of storm into the chamber of his beloved one.

Doña Sol (touching his clothes)
Oh! Heavens! your cloak is drenched!
The rain must pour!

Hernani I know not

Doña Sol And the cold—
You must be cold!

Hernani I feel it not

Doña Sol Take off
This cloak then pray

Hernani Doña beloved tell me
When night brings happy sleep to you so pure
And innocent—sleep that half opens your mouth

Closing your eyes with its light finger-touch—
Does not some angel show how dear you are
To an unhappy man, by all the world
Abandoned and repulsed?

Take another passage, in which Doña Sol, whose hand is sought by the wealthy and illustrious Duke de Pastrana, expresses her resolve to share the fortunes of Hernani rather than marry the Duke:

Hernani. Now, wish you from the Duke, or me,
To be delivered? You must choose 'twixt us,
Whether you marry him, or follow me.

Doña Sol. You I will follow!

Hernani. Among companions rude,
Men all proscribed, of whom the headsman knows
The names already. Men whom neither steel
Nor touch of pity softens, each one urged
By some blood feud that's personal. Wilt thou
Then come? They'd call thee mistress of my band,
For know you not that I a bandit am?
When I was hunted throughout Spain, alone
In thickest forest, and on mountains steep,
Among rocks which but the soaring eagle spied,
Old Catalonia like a mother proved.
Among her hills—free, poor, and stern—I grew;
And now, to-morrow if this horn should sound
Three thousand men would rally at the call.
You shudder, and should pause to ponder well.
Think what 'twill prove to follow me through woods
And over mountain paths, with comrades like
The fiends that come in dreams! To live in fear,
Suspicious of a sound, of voices, eyes;
To sleep upon the earth, drink at the stream,
And hear at night, while nourishing, perchance,
Some wakeful babe, the whistling musket balls.
To be a wanderer with me proscribed,

And when my father I shall follow—then
Een to the scaffold you to follow me

Dofia Sol I'll follow you

Hernani The Duke is wealthy, great
And prosperous without a stain upon
His ancient name He offers you his hand
And can give all things—treasures dignities
And pleasure—

Dofia Sol We'll set out to-morrow Oh!
Hernani censure not th audacity
Of this decision Are you angel in me
Or demon? Only one thing do I know—
That I'm your slave Now listen whereso'er
You go I go—pause you or move I'm yours
Why act I thus? Ah! that I cannot tell
Only I want to see you evermore
When sound of your receding footsteps dies
I feel my heart stops beating without you
Myself seems absent but when I detect
Again the step I love my soul comes back,
I breathe—I live once more

Hernani (*embracing her*) Oh! angel mine!

The close of the play is extremely mournful
The lovers die of poison in each other's arms As
the death-dealing potion burns its way into their
vitals *Dofia Sol* says

Towards new and brighter light
We now together open out our wings
Let us with even flight set out to reach
A fairer world.

Great Novels

But the stage was not broad enough for the
exhaustless energy of Victor Hugo Hence, in

the autumn and winter of the same year which witnessed the triumph of *Hernani*, he was hard at work on one of those great novels which attest that his mastery as an artist in prose was not less magnificent than as an artist in verse. *Notre Dame de Paris* appeared on February 13 1831 to be followed in after years by *Les Misérables* and *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*. These splendid productions throbbing with an almost superhuman energy are without a parallel in the literature of fiction. They are prose poems of the sublimest order which attest the great heartedness of their author and his splend d distinction as the poet of the inherent majesty of man as a creature divinely fashioned and capable of rising to the loftiest heights of nobleness and heroic self sacrifice.

His belief is that misery and wrong and even guilt and crime cannot stamp the last spark of divinity out of man and that from this lingering spark when fanned by the breath of God a fire may be kindled potent to consume all baseness and restore to the great Creator the heart which He has fashioned for His dwelling place and the conscience which He has appointed as His throne.

Much has been said concerning the startling realism of Victor Hugo and in this quality he has been compared with Zola. An able critic however has justly said that while Victor Hugo is a great



MONUMENT TO VICTOR HUGO
By Barras

poet, trying to prove that man is by nature but a little lower than the angels, Zola is a cynical materialist trying to prove that man is a little lower than the brutes

Wonderful Poems

Returning now to our author as a poet, it was in his twenty ninth year that he began to pour forth that continuous stream of song which has left him without a rival in his own land. These poems of his prime sweep the whole range of human passion and pathos. Love, childhood, patriotism, nature, God—all are chosen as themes of poetic inspiration, and all are treated with a depth of insight and a magic of style which have secured his title to immortality. From the 'Autumn Leaves,' to the 'Songs of the Twilight' and, again, from the 'Inner Voices' to the 'Sunbeams and Shadows' we follow for a period of ten fruitful years a river of melody which held France captive by its spell.

The versification of these poems is masterly in the extreme, full of the most subtly invented and powerful effects of fascinating word music. When the poet chooses to rein in his exhaustless energy, and impose a curb upon his frenzied passion, the result is a triumph of literary style which places him in the front rank of those artists in words

who not only write but sing for us, blending with their office as truth tellers a strain of rhythmic melody which enchants the ear as fully as the thoughts conveyed enchant the intellect.

Amid such an embarrassment of riches it is difficult to select

We question, however, whether, amid the wealth of glorious 'Autumn Leaves, folded in the volume bearing that title there is one more beautiful or more imperishable than the poem entitled

'Prayer for All,'

in which innocent children, fresh from God are asked to intercede for those who toil, and weep and sin in the troubled world of men. The poet regards prayer as a natural instinct

There's nothing here below which does not find
Its tendency O'er plains the rivers wind
And reach the sea the bee by instinct driven
Finds out the homed flowers the eagle flies
To seek the sun the vulture, where death lies
The swallow to the spring the prayer to heaven!

Furthermore the poet is impressed by the beautiful idea that there is a special virtue in the prayers of children

For those whom vice has captive led
Children may watch and God beseech,
They are sweet flowers that perfume shed—
Censers that sacred incense spread—
Their blameless words the heavens reach

Moved by this conviction the poet says :

My daughter, go and pray, the night draws near,
Through clouds a golden planet doth appear,
The outline of the hills now fades away,
In shade the wagon scarce seems moving —Hark!
All things seek rest, trees that the roadway mark,
Stirred by the wind, shake off the dust of day.

Children with angels at this hour renew
Sweet speech, while we our strange delights pursue,
All little children, eyes upraised to heaven,
Kneeling upon the floor, hands clasped, feet bare,
At the same hour, and in the self same prayer,
Ask the All Father we may be forgiven

Child, give thy prayers as alms, a priceless store,
To father, mother kin long gone before—
To rich, whose riches yet no joys afford
To poor, to widows, to the vile and base,
All sin and suffering let thy prayers embrace,
Give to the dead, e'en give *them* to the Lord

Pity for All

The mastery exercised by this lord of song over words and cadences, together with the pathetic beauty of his teaching, may be further illustrated by the following verses from a poem entitled 'To My Daughter' What quality can pertain to gracious and pitying womanhood, serene in virtue and strengthened and ennobled by trust in God, which

this noble father does not invite his child to covet
and acquire?

Be good and gentle raise a blameless brow
As day displays its light within the sky
Let through your azure eyes loved daughter show
Your soul's integrity

Earth does to none of joy or triumph give,
All things are incomplete all quickly fade
Dear child Time is a shadow and our life
Of the same substance made

To all men is their lot a weary thrall
And for their happiness—ah! Fate unkind!—
All things have failed alas! in saying all
How little do we find

That little is what each one fain would hold
What each desires and seeks with fruitless toil—
A word a sounding name a little gold
A look a loving smile

Kind Heaven that sees our sorrows pains and fears
Feels for our lives to vanity a prey
And every dawn bedews with pitying tears
The birth of each sad day

God gives us light at every step we go
And tells us of His nature and our own
One certain law from all things here below
And from mankind is shown

All must obey that edict from above
Which in the compass of each soul doth fall
Nothing to hate dear child and all to love
At least to pity all

by Mr W C K Wilde, and entitled 'Insult not the Fallen' There are some who may not approve the charity extended in these lines to the most mournful and unhappy of all human creatures But it will surely meet with His approval who heard the mute appeal of the 'woman of the city who was a sinner,' lifted her from the mire, and thrilled her desolate trampled, and despairing soul with the joy of a divine forgiveness

I tell you hush! no word of sneering scorn—
 True fallen, but God knows how deep her sorrow
 Poor girl too many like her only born
 To love one day—to sin—and die the morrow
 What know you of her struggles or her grief?
 Or what wild storms of want and woe and pain
 Tore down her soul from honour? As a leaf
 From autumn branches or a drop of rain
 That hung in frailest splendour from a bough—
 Bright glistening in the sunlight of God's day—
 So had she clung to virtue once But now—
 See heavens clear pearl polluted with earth's clay!
 The sin is yours—with your accursed gold—
 Man's wealth is master—woman's soul the slave!
 Some purest water still the mire may hold
 Is there no hope for her—no power to save?
 Yea, once again to draw up from the clay
 The fallen rain drop till it shine above
 Or save a fallen soul needs but one ray
 Of heavens sunshine or of human love

A profound and sublime significance belongs to another poem from the pen of our author, in which

the inspired singer pours contempt upon the gauds and shows of the transitory world, the tramp of its armies and the triumphs of its conquerors and kings. We append only two stanzas of the poem

What cares my heart about these births of kings,
These victories whose fame together brings
 Bell peals and cannons roar!
Which prayers with pompous ceremonial make,
And where by night, in cities kept awake
 The star like rockets soar

Elsewhere direct your eyes to God alone!
In all below man's vanity is shown,
 Fame flees and neer can rest,
Gold crown and mitres shine but quickly pass
And are not worth (God's gift) one blade of grass
 Made for the linnet's nest.

His lot breath heaves his tawny side
 In darkness steeped is his red eye
 Deep in the cavern on his side
 He sleeps outstretched formidably
 Sleep lulls to rest his sateless rage
 He dreams oblivious of all wrong
 With calm brow that denotes the sage
 With dread fangs that bespeak the strong
 The vells are drunk by noontide drouth
 Of naught but slumber is he fain,
 Like a cavern is his huge mouth
 And like a forest his ruddy mane

The personal appearance of the poet in his early prime is thus described by Théophile Gautier 'What most struck one at first sight in Victor Hugo was a truly monumental brow that rose like a white marble entablature over his quietly earnest face The beauty and vastness of that forehead were in truth wellnigh superhuman It seemed to afford room for the greatest thoughts Crowns of gold or laurel would fitly have found a place there as on the brow of a Caesar or a god It was set in a frame of light long auburn hair But though the hair was somewhat long the poet wore neither beard moustache whiskers nor imperial the face being most carefully shaven and of a particular kind of paleness burnt through as it were and illumined by two eyes of bronze gold like the eyes of an eagle The drawing of the mouth was firm and decided with lips curved and

bent down at the corners—lips that, when parted by a smile, displayed teeth of dazzling whiteness

Such Victor Hugo appeared to us when first we met, and the image has never faded from our memory. We cherish with pious care that portrait of him as he was, young, handsome, smiling radiant with genius, and shedding round him a sort of phosphorescence of glory.

The astounding variety of the themes which Victor Hugo had touched and adorned by the magic of his genius, his enormous receptivity, together with his wealth of literary lore, may be illustrated by the following lines on a subject so treated that those who have described him as a man of strong passions, endowed with a remarkable gift of utterance, but cramped and hindered by an imperfect education—in short as a kind of frenzied barbarian—may well pause to reconsider their verdict. The translation of the poem is by Mathilde Blind, and its subject

'The Burning of a Library'

What! miscreant! you fling your flaming torch
 Into this pile of venerable truths
 These master works that thunder forth and lighten—
 Into this tomb become Times inventory
 Into the ages, the antique man, the past
 Which still spells out the future—history
 Which having once begun will never end
 Into the poets into this mine of Bibles

And all this heap divine! Dread Aeschylus,
Homer, and Job, upright against the horizon,
Molière, Voltaire, and Kant you set on fire!
Thus turning human reason into smoke!
Have you forgotten that your liberator
Is this same Book? The Book that's set on high
And shines, because it lightens and illumines;
It undermines the gallows, war, and famine;
It speaks—the Slave and Pariah disappear.
Open a Book! Plato, Beccaria, Milton,
Those prophets, Dante, Shakespeare or Corneille—
Shall not their great souls waken yours in you?

The Book is your physician, guardian, guide;
It heals your hate, and cures your frenzied mood.
See what you lose by your own fault, alas!
Why, know the Book's your wealth! The Book
means Truth,
Knowledge and Duty, Virtue, Progress, Right,
And Reason scattering hence delirious dreams.
And you destroy this, you! O shame upon you!

Victor Hugo and Childhood

While we have in Victor Hugo the imagination of France in the century of storm and stress which followed her great Revolution, and while a portion of the wild and uncurbed fire of that Revolution made riot in his blood, we find in him also the better heart of France; rich in domestic feeling, rich in patriotism, and exquisite in its tenderness and regard for little children.

Visitors to France cannot fail to note the love

of its people for children, and its indulgence towards them, and Victor Hugo was pre eminently the poet lover of little children

The love of children may be regarded as a natural impulse Few can escape from their magic and their charm In the presence of the children we renew our youth They keep us from growing cold and from growing old They cling to our garments and impede our progress towards petrification We are charmed by their innocence their trustfulness their heavenly uncaringness In their pure presence we cannot despair of the world There is always hope for humanity because human creatures come to us not as depraved men, or as abandoned women but as little children

While however the love of children may be described as a natural impulse it differs widely in degree, and we scarcely look for any manifestation of it in a great mind busy with great concerns To this however, Victor Hugo is a lovely and most fascinating exception Children gather round his feet like blue bells round the feet of the giant oak or are borne upward in some of his finest flights of song like wrens nestling between the wings of the eagle.

The following lines in Mr Swinburnes translation bear witness to the reverence of this great poet for the unsullied heart of the child

Take heed of this small child of earth,
He is great, he hath in him God most high
Children before their fleshly birth
Are lights alive in the blue sky

In our light bitter world of wrong
They come God gives us them awhile,
His speech is in their stammering tongue,
And His forgiveness in their smile.

Their sweet light rests upon our eyes
Alas! their right to joy is plain
If they are hungry, Paradise
Weeps and, if cold, Heaven thrills with pain

The want that saps their sinless flower
Speaks judgement on sin's ministers
Man holds an angel in his power
Ah! deep in Heaven what thunder stirs—

When God seeks out these tender things
Whom in the shadow where we sleep
He sends His clothed about with wings,
And finds them ragged babes that weep

It may be justly said that the winsome loveliness of childish ways and childish thoughts and dreams was not seized and expressed in verse until Victor Hugo wrote of little children

'What child of poetry,' asks a discerning critic, 'will compare with his? As in the days of old, "out of the strong came forth sweetness," so from this poet of storm and battle, this cloud compeller, whose words often boom and reverberate like thunder, so from him, when childhood was his

theme, have come some of the gentlest, most graceful, most delicate, most tender of human words'

The sweet child idylls of the volume entitled *How to be a Grandfather* become deeply interesting when it is known that they are simple recitals of little incidents in the life of his own charming grandchildren, Georges and Jeanne. His love for the little maid who so often nestled near his heart is thus expressed

O rose lipped Jenny of mine in those big books
Whose pictures are worth your crovings and happy looks
The books I must suffer your fingers to crumple or tear
There is many a beautiful poem but none so rare
As you my poem when catching sight of me
Your whole little body thrills and leaps with glee,
The greatest men for writing ne'er have written

A better thing than the thought a dawn in your eye
And the musng strange and vague of one who scans
The earth and man with an angel's ignorance

Ay Jenny God's not far off when you are nigh

In the view of Victor Hugo the art of being a grandfather consisted in being full of love and delicate sympathy, and unwearied indulgence. To the father was committed the rod of discipline to the grandfather the ministry of kindness. Louis Blanc tells the pretty story that on one occasion Jeanne was put in the dark cupboard for misbehaviour. But while there her grandfather smuggled for her comfort a pot of jam. Not long

afterwards Madame Drouet, the lady who kept the poet's house said to him, in the presence of the child 'You spoil those children It is impossible to do anything with them It is you who should be put in the dark cupboard' 'Never mind, grandfather, whispered Jeanne, lifting her beautiful eyes, 'when you are in the dark cupboard I will bring you a pot of jam This incident is made the occasion of a lovely little poem from the pen of the master, which is but one out of many of the sweetest child lyrics in the world of literature.

'The Epic of the Lion'

One of the very finest of our poet's songs of childhood bears the above title The lesson of the poem is the fearless innocence of the little child and how the savage beast is conquered and subdued by it as the lion by Una in Spenser's magic story

We append a few lines of this fine poem blending majesty with gentleness in the translation by Sir Edwin Arnold

A Lion in his jaws caught up a child—
Not harming it—and to the woodland wild
With secret streams and lairs bore off his prey
The beast as one might cull a flower in May

It was a rosy boy son of a king
A ten year lad with bright eyes shining wide
And save this son his majesty beside
Had but one girl—two years of age or so

The story goes on to relate how the lion bears the boy into his cave :

His food wild herbs, his bed the earthly floor.

A valorous Knight of the Court goes forth full-armed to encounter the lordly lion and snatch from him his precious prey. Then, in lines of marvellous descriptive power, we learn the sad result :

*Stout though the Knight, the Lion stronger was,
And tore that brave breast under its cuirass,
And striking blow on blow with ponderous paw,
Forced plate and rivet off, until you saw
Through all the armour's cracks the bright blood spirt,
As when clenched fingers make a mulberry squirt;
And piece by piece he stripped the iron sheath,
Helm, armlets, greaves—gnawed bare the bones beneath,
Scrunching that hero till he sprawled—alas!
Beneath his shield, all blood, and mud, and mess;
Whereat the Lion feasted—then it went
Back to its rocky couch and slept content*

*Full of a lion's vast serenity,
He slept secure, leaving still night to pass
The moon rose, starting spectres on the grass,
Shrouding the marsh with mist, blotting the ways,
And melting the black woodland to grey maze;
No stir was seen below, above no motion
Save of the white stars trooping to the ocean;
And while the mole and cricket in the brake
Kept watch, the Lion's measured breath did make
Slow symphony that kept all creatures calm.*

Other messengers and valiant men of the Court are sent in chase of the lordly brute, but they are all defeated and devoured.

At length the daring monarch of the forest ventures, with his prey in his mouth, into the palace grounds, where he resolves to eat the boy. Here, however, an apparition confronts him, which bids him pause.

In the palace grounds
An alcove in the garden stands, and there
A tiny thing—forgot in the general fear
Lulled in the flower-sweet dreams of infancy,
Bathed with soft sunlight falling brokenly
Through leaf and lattice—was that moment waking,
A little lovely maid most dear and taking
The Prince's sister, all alone—undressed—
She sat up singing children sing so best

A voice of joy, than silver lute string softer!
A mouth all rose-bud blossoming in laughter!
A baby angel hard at play! a dream
Of Bethlehem's cradle or what nests would seem
If girls were hatched!—all these! Eyes too so blue
That sea and sky might own their sapphire new!
Neck bare arms bare pink legs and stomach bare—
Naught hid the roseate satin skin save where
A little white-laced shift was fastened free,
She looked as fresh singing thus peacefully,
As stars at twilight or as April's heaven
A floweret—you had said—divinely given
To show on earth how God's own lilies grow
Such was the beauteous baby maid and so
The Beast caught sight of her and stopped—

And then

Entered—the floor creaked as he stalked straight in
Above the playthings by the little bed
The Lion put his shaggy massive head

Dreadful with savage might and lordly scorn
 More dreadful with that princely prey so borne
 Which she quickly spying Brother! brother! cried
 'Oh my own brother! and internised—
 Looking a living rose that made the place
 Brighter and warmer with its fearless grace—
 She gazed upon that monster of the wood
 Whose yellow balls not Typhon had withstood
 And—well! who knows what thoughts these small heads hold?—
 She rose up in her cot full light and bold
 And took her pink fist angrily at him
 Whereon—close to the little bed's white rim
 All dainty silk and laces—this huge Brute
 Set down her brother gently at her foot
 Just as a mother might and said to her—
Don't be put out now! there he is dear!—there!

In his exquisite blending of gentleness with fiery strength of flower like beauty with lyric passion blazing at white heat Victor Hugo reminds us of that Mount Vesuvius at the foot of which he played in boyhood. His head is raised to take the tempest and to parley with the storm cloud while not seldom from his heart of fire words of wrath and scorn unquenchable pour like molten lava upon thrones and palaces yet all the while the wavelets lisp and sparkle at his feet lambs play fearlessly beneath his shadow and nestling in his rugged bosom are blossoms too faint to catch a weary bee.

Born of a gentler mood than the idyll from which we have quoted at such length are the following lines, describing his little grandchild Jenny in sleep. The poem is entitled

' *The Siesta* '

Safe sheltered from the noontide glare
And noises of the busy day
There sleeps serene and free from care
Jeanette my child tired out with play
They, more than we, the dreamland need
Those children, fresh from Heaven's own smile,
The world is cold and bleak indeed
For gentle hearts that know no guile
She seeks the angels and the fays
Titania Puck, and Ariel too,
With cherubs she in fancy plays
Mid sylvan groves and skies of blue
Oh! great our wonder could we know
The hidden joys of that blest sleep,
What dazzling sights what visions glow
While watch her guardian angels keep!

These tiny feet of roseate hue
Are resting like the peaceful soul
The cradle lace of azure blue
Seems an immortal's aureole
There looks to my enraptured sight
A rosy light amid the folds
I laugh and sadness takes its flight,
A radiant star that cradle holds

And it was not only the children of his own house whom Victor Hugo loved To take a child to him, of whatever people or nation, was the sure way to his heart. During his exile in Guernsey he gave weekly dinners to the children of the poor Nor

did this devotion to childhood go unrewarded, for his love of infancy and youth kept him young in heart until the end. The snows of age could not chill his affections, and he went forth to God, when the final summons came, a little child.

Storm and Stress

~ In the year 1845 Victor Hugo was created, by Louis Philippe, a peer of France. On the downfall of that monarch, in 1848 he embraced the principles of the Revolution, was elected to the National Assembly and became one of its foremost orators. Among those elected with him was Louis Napoleon who through the magic of his name was ere long chosen as President of the Assembly. Victor Hugo at first supported his candidature but when he saw that his policy tended to personal despotism, he became a violent opponent of the new dictator and took up that position of extreme radicalism from which he never afterwards retreated. In 1851 came Napoleon's *coup d'état* and with it the destruction of the Republic. Victor Hugo at first sought to rouse resistance but it soon became evident that the cause of the people was lost and on December 14 he fled a fugitive and an exile to Brussels. But the cause of the people still had a foremost place in his interest and regard. 'My brothers' he writes—

My brothers have for ever all my heart,
And, far from them in body, I am near
In spirit looking at and judging fate
And to complete the rough hewn human soul
I hold above the people downward bent,
The urn of pity, ceaselessly I pour,
Yet constantly refill it But I take
For cover the pine woods—with sombre shades

In another place, referring to his exile, he says

In times of tumult and unrest
When just men are by wrong opprest,
The poet soul must imitate
The heroes it would celebrate.

And if I perish there is Heaven above
And earth born passions shall endure on high
Ennobled is the soul by purest love
And who knows how to love knows how to die

psalm, and the sea-birds bear away his sorrow on their snowy wings, he writes :

Since Justice slumbers in the abysm,
 Since the Crimes crowned with *despotism*,
 Since all most upright souls are smitten,
 Since proudest souls are bowed for shame,
 Since on the wall in lines of flame
 My country's dark dishonours written,

O grand Republic of our sires,
 Pantheon filled with sacred fires,
 In the free azure golden dome,
 Temple with Shades immortal thronged,
 Since thus thy glory they have wronged,
 With 'Empire staining freedom's home,

Since in my country each soul born
 Is base, since they are laughed to scorn
 The true, the pure, the great, the brave,
 The indignant eyes of history,
 Honour, law, right, and liberty,
 And those—alas!—within the grave,

Solitude, exile! I love them
 Sorrow, be thou my diadem!

I love this islet lonely, bold
 Jersey whereover England's old
 Free banner doth the storm blast brave,
 Yon darkling ocean's ebb and flow,
 Its vessels each a wandering plough
 Whose mystic furrow is the wave

'The Chastisements'

The most remarkable of his literary productions during his exile from France was, however, a

volume of poems published in 1853, and entitled *Les Châtiments*, or *The Chastisements*. These passionate poems can only be compared to the roar of an enraged lion. Where in the whole realm of literature shall we find such another contrast as that found in Victor Hugo laying siege, on the one hand, to the hearts of little children, and on the other lashing, as with a whip of scorpions, Napoleon, III? Out of the lion's mouth has come forth honey, but we find he is a lion still, shaking his brindled mane at monarchs, and mangling them with his iron jaws.

Such is the trenchant power of these vituperative poems that it has been suggested by an admiring critic that the ultimate mission of Louis Napoleon was to call down from Victor Hugo these superb invectives. They are fitly termed *Chastisements*, for, as one has said, the poet 'uses his pen as a Russian soldier would use the knout, and we see the spurt of blood where it falls upon the tortured victim.'

How terrible, even in an inadequate translation, are the following lines, so awfully prophetic of the horrors of Sedan! They can be justified only as coming from the pen of one who beheld all the enormities of the *coup d'état*, when the boulevards of Paris were swept with grape shot, volleys of musketry fired in every direction, while the people

in the streets, among whom were women and little children were bayoneted and cut down by the sabre. In the judgement of the poet assassination is too merciful a fate for the author of such iniquities

Let Sparta daggers use and Rome the sword

But let not us in haste revenge to fetch,

A Brutus to knave Bonaparte afford

But for a bitterer future keep the wretch

I warrant you you shall be satisfied—

You by whom exiles grievous weight is borne

Captives and martyrs now by him defied—

You shall be sated you who grieve and mourn

Still in the scabbard leave the impatient blade

The guilty ne'er is pardoned by his crime

Trust the commands of God though long delayed

(The patient judge) to his Avenger—Time.

Thus did this Danton of the pen denounce an Emperor of France in violent but splendid verse, verse wild and terrible as the glare of volcanic flames blown upon by storm. His scorn runs upon the ground like fire and withers like the breath of the simoon. Probably he would have been less severe if he had seen in prophetic vision Napoleon III, grey, haggard, despairing, in the fateful hour when he surrendered to the conquering Germans, after the blood of the soldiers of France had been poured out like water, while eighty thousand of them were made prisoners by the foe.

It is then he might have written the following splendid lines addressed to the proscribed and taken from the poem he entitles 'Light in Darkness'

Let us not doubt but trust! The end is mystery
Bede we! Of Nero kings as of the panther He,
Our God can break the teeth
God trieth us my friends! let us have faith and calm
And work! O desert sands! hath not He sown the palm
Your fiery dust beneath!

Because He doth not end His work even when we list
Delivers Rome to the priest, and to the jesuit Christ
And to the knave the True
Should we despair? Of Him The just in very deed?
No! no! He only knew the name of every seed
He for His harvest threw

The future O Proscribed! is ours Great Liberty
 Glory, and Peace come back in cars of victory
 On thundering axletrees
 This Crime triumphant now passeth like smoke away
 A passing smoke a lie So he may boldly say
 Who the high heaven sees

Fiercer the Caesars are than waves with foamy mane
 But God saith—Through their nostrils I will put a rein
 And in the r mouths a bit
 And verily I will lead them yield they or resist
 Them their buffoons their flute players even as I list,
 To the shades where phantoms sit

God saith the granite base whereon they stand so well
 Crumbleth away and lo! they disappear pell mell
 Their fortunes falling through
 North wind! North wind! that comest to beat against our doors,
 O tell us, is it thou scatterest these emperors?
 Where hast thou flung them to?

The Religious Significance of Victor Hugo

From these magnificent lines we gather something of the religious significance of Victor Hugo. There is little doubt that for many years of his life, exile and wrong so embittered his spirit and clouded his vision that he lost hold of God and drifted into those 'sunless gulfs of doubt' which involve bewilderment and despair. But a soul so vast, and a spirit so lofty could not permanently abide in a state of orphanage, without God and without hope in the world. From this condition he emerged through the grace of the Divine Spirit

and a deeper study of history, into a firm belief in the everlasting righteousness which pervades all things and which out of evil brings final good, and out of darkness heavenly splendour. Eternity opened its gates to his perplexed and doubting soul and through faith in its divine issues he was led to trust in

The holy God the living will
Who amid change and ruin rests
A righteous spirit still

M. Paul Stapfer in his personal recollections of Victor Hugo records the following monologue which fell from the lips of the poet in an after dinner conversation. How poor how small how absurd he said. atheism is! God exists. I am more sure of His existence than I am of my own. If God lends me sufficient length of life I want to write a book showing how necessary to the soul prayer is—how necessary and how efficacious. Personally I never pass four hours without prayer. I pray regularly every morning and evening. If I wake in the night I pray. What do I pray for? Strength. I know what is right and what is wrong but I realize my imperfections and that of myself I have not the strength to resist evil. God surrounds and upholds us. We are in Him. From Him we have life movement being. All is created by Him. But it is not true to say that He has created the world

He creates it unceasingly He is the Soul of the Universe

In addition to this grand confession a prose passage from his pen written in the later years of his stormy career, bears ample testimony to the larger hope which hung like the moon in his meditative night as the time of his departure drew near. It is the misfortune of our time he says to place everything in this life. In giving to man for his sole end and aim the life of earth you aggravate all his miseries by the final *negation*. And that which was only suffering—that is to say the law of God—is changed to despair the law of hell. The duty of us all legislators b'shops poets is to help to raise all forces toward heaven to direct all souls towards the future life. Let us say with high confidence that no one has suffered unjustly or in vain. Death is restitution. God appears at the end of all. It would not be worth while to live if we were to die entirely. That which alleviates labour and sanctifies toil is to have before us the vision of a better world through the darkness of this life. That world is to me more real than the chimera which we devour and which we call life. It is for ever before my eyes. It is the supreme certainty of my reason as it is the supreme consolation of my soul'

A Hymn of Praise written also in the evening

of life, records our author's gratitude for the faith which succeeded his years of incertitude and doubt.

My barque Thou bring'st to port safe from the stormy main,
My branches wellnigh dead have budded forth again,
I bless and thank Thee Lord for that life-giving breath,
Which kindled up the flame so nearly quenched in death

I saw without a sigh my happiness depart,
O Lord I felt condemned to weariness of heart
Along the desert path I wandered all forlorn
And yet I never cursed the day when I was born

This is the truth which now to all the world I tell
Emptied of self I longed that I in heaven might dwell.
Praise God! When bleats the sheep the lamb comes straight
way home,
I call upon my Lord and lo! my Lord is come

To me He said My law can never heavy be
To thee who in My steps dost follow faithfully
Amongst the happy ones a bright robe thou shalt wear,
And wash thine hands from stain in innocency there

As old age crept in upon the poet, the fiery heart was tamed into meekness the turbulent passion stilled into solemn repose, and he gave to the world yet richer and sweeter fruits of his genius. From Guernsey, where he resided until his return to Paris after the catastrophe of Sedan, he gave to the world *Contemplations*, *The Legends of the Ages*, *Songs of the Streets and Woods*, and *The Four Winds of the Spirit*, volumes of verse so profound and so beautiful that they stand supreme

of life, records our authors gratitude for the faith which succeeded his years of incertitude and doubt.

My barque Thou bring'st to port safe from the stormy main,
My branches wellnigh dead have budded forth again,
I bless and thank Thee Lord for that life-giving breath
Which kindled up the flame so nearly quenched in death

I saw without a sigh my happiness depart,
O Lord I felt condemned to weariness of heart
Along the desert path I wandered all forlorn
And yet I never cursed the day when I was born

This is the truth which now to all the world I tell
Emptied of self I longed that I in heaven might dwell
Praise God! When bleats the sheep the lamb comes straight
way home,

I call upon my Lord and lo! my Lord is come

To me He said, My law can never heavy be
To thee who in My steps dost follow faithfully
Amongst the happy ones a bright robe thou shalt wear
And wash thine hands from stain in innocency there

As old age crept in upon the poet, the fiery heart was tamed into meekness, the turbulent passion stilled into solemn repose, and he gave to the world yet richer and sweeter fruits of his genius From Guernsey, where he resided until his return to Paris after the catastrophe of Sedan, he gave to the world *Contemplations*, *The Legends of the Ages*, *Songs of the Streets and Woods*, and *The Four Winds of the Spirit*, volumes of verse so profound and so beautiful that they stand supreme

name, he then addressed an appeal to the advancing Prussians, entreating them to spare 'the city of cities' the humiliation of a siege. But the iron ring drew closer and closer round its walls, while the invaders coolly suggested the propriety of 'hanging the poet.'

The 'old man eloquent' then sought relief in the joy of creation, and the various volumes produced between his seventieth and eighty third years form an astounding record of untiring industry.

Did our space permit, other illustrations might be given of the power of a poet whose breadth and brilliance of conception, unrivalled strength of wing, and swift succession of daring and magnificent images, have crowned him in literature, not only as the greatest son of France but also as one of the foremost singers of the world. We will content ourselves, however, with a few brief extracts, which may be fitly termed

Heaven Born Charity

Above the old man's couch of woe
She bows her forehead pure and even,
There's nothing fairer here below
There's nothing grander up in heaven

To every den of want and toil
She goes and leaves the poorest fed,
Leaves wine and bread and genial oil
And hopes that blossom in her tread

And fire too beautiful bright fire
That mocks the glowing dawn begun
Where Iaving set the blind old sire
He dreams he's sitting in the sun

Then over all the earth she runs
And seeks in the cold mists of life
Those poor forsaken little ones
Who droop and weary in the strife

by the wine of his immortal song,' will cherish his memory until the end of time. Nevertheless, one who speaks the tongue which Shakespeare spake may be permitted to place this 'Crown of Wild Olive' upon the brow of one whom we must number as among the foremost poets of the ages

We will close our notice of this great Frenchman with the following stanzas from the pen of Algernon Charles Swinburne

Life ever lasting, while the worlds endure,
Death self abased before a power more high,
Shall bear one witness, and their word stand sure,
That not till Time be dead shall this man die
Love, like a bird, comes loyal to his lure,
Fame flies before him, wingless else to fly
A child's heart towards his kind is not more pure,
An eagle's toward the sun no lordlier eye.
Ave sweet as love and proud
As fame, though hushed and bowed,
Yearns towards him silent as his face goes by
All crowns before his crown
Triumphantly bow down,
For pride that one more great than all draws nigh,
All souls applaud all hearts acclaim
One heart benign, one soul supreme.

The Close

After his long life of battling days the twilight of Victor Hugo was serene and beautiful and death lingered to disturb it. He lived greatly to the end though at the last he suffered greatly, and prayed for release from his tortured clay. On May 22, 1885, while the birds were singing in the branches and the lark soaring in the sky, his wish was granted, and he also took wing. His last words were for his grandchildren, and then he fell asleep like a tired child.

Shortly before the last summons came he said to a friend, 'I give fifty thousand francs to the poor. I wish to be taken to the grave in their hearse.' But the admiring nation for which he had suffered loss and exile could not so bury its greatest son. On the contrary, it accorded him a funeral such as the world has seldom witnessed. The mourning host comprehended whatever is renowned in France for position, genius, and fame. While cars, cannon, drums, trumpets, banners, a procession ten miles long, a million spectators, and thousands of wreaths cast on the tomb, expressed the profound and pathetic enthusiasm of the land which gave him birth. His real greatness can only be adequately appreciated by the people who fed by the bread of his deathless word and cheered

by the wine of his immortal song' will cherish his memory until the end of time. Nevertheless, one who speaks the tongue which Shakespeare spake may be permitted to place this 'Crown of Wild Olive' upon the brow of one whom we must number as among the foremost poets of the ages

We will close our notice of this great Frenchman with the following stanzas from the pen of Algernon Charles Swinburne

Life ever lasting while the worlds endure
 Death self abased before a power more high
 Shall bear one witness and their word stand sure
 That not till Time be dead shall this man die.
 Love, like a bird, comes loyal to his lure
 Fame flies before him wingless else to fly
 A child's heart towards his kind is not more pure
 An eagle's toward the sun no lordlier eye
 And sweet as love and proud
 As fame though hushed and bowed
 Yearns towards him silent as his face goes by
 All crowns before his crown
 Triumphantly bow down
 For pride that one more great than all draws nigh
 All souls applaud all hearts acclaim
 One heart benign one soul supreme one conquering name